

SUBJECT: **Open Data Administrative Procedure**

DATE: **January 17, 2018**

APPROVAL:


Patrick Banger, Town Manager

Open Data Administrative Procedure

SUBJECT: Guidelines and procedures to support Gilbert's Open Data Initiative

Introduction

The Town of Gilbert (the Town) is an organization of servant leaders committed to improving the quality of life of our citizens through accountability, integrity, innovation and communication. We are committed to being a technology leader and a high-performing governmental organization. As such, the Town will provide high-quality data to stakeholders to improve efficiency and decision making, while enhancing trust and confidence among our residents by providing an open, user-friendly, single point of access for data.

The Town believes that access to public information promotes a higher level of civic engagement and allows citizens to provide valuable feedback to government officials regarding local issues. The thoughtful implementation of an open data program improves provision of services, increases transparency and access to public information, and enhances coordination and efficiencies among departments, partner organizations, and citizens. Through the Gilbert Open Data Initiative, the Town hopes to proactively provide information currently sought through public records requests, thereby saving the Town time and money and, in commitment to the spirit of Open Government, the Town will consider public information to be open by default and will proactively publish data and data containing contextual information, consistent with relevant public records law. Additionally, the protection of privacy, confidentiality and security will be maintained as a paramount priority while also advancing the government's transparency and accountability through open data.

Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to formally establish the guidelines and procedures to support the Gilbert Open Data Initiative. The Gilbert Open Data Administrative Procedure, or the "policy", defines Gilbert's commitment to creating an Open Data Portal to increase transparency of the organization and to provide tools for residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to use data and increase engagement with the Town. This Open Data Portal will ensure that data that is generated by the Town in service to residents is open and available for use by default while maintaining the privacy, security, and confidentiality of that data. The Town recognizes that information and data are valuable resources that belong to residents and that making these resources available can fuel innovation, engagement, and discovery.

This policy applies to all officers and employees of the Town who create, manipulate or acquire information, records, or data on behalf of the Town. The requirements of this policy t apply to any Town

department, office, administrative unit, commission, board, advisory committee, or other division of the Town government (“agency”), including the records of third party agency contractors that create, maintain, or acquire information, records, or data on behalf of a Town agency, that are reasonably related to the goals and mission of the Town or as defined by the laws of the State of Arizona.

Section 2: Definitions

“**Data**” means narrative, textual, geospatial, tabular, legislative, statistical, factual, quantitative, or qualitative information that is maintained or created by or on behalf of the Town. This definition is inclusive of software source code developed or maintained by or on behalf of the Town.

“**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”).

“**Metadata**” means contextual information about a set of data that is served alongside the data and contains, at minimum, the party responsible for the data, the frequency of updates to the data, the date of last publication, any creation processes and modifications made to the source data to allow for publication, unique identifiers that distinguish the data as a whole as well as individual identifiers that distinguish entries in the data, and any other information that provides factual context or support for the data. Ideally, the metadata accompanying a dataset are sufficient to permit a data user to find, evaluate, understand, and re-use that dataset without needing to seek additional information.

“**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.

“**Dataset**” means a named collection of related records, with the collection containing data organized or formatted in a specific or prescribed way, often in tabular form.

“**Protected information**” means any dataset or portion thereof to which an agency may deny access pursuant to the Town of Gilbert’s Privacy and State of Arizona public records laws or any other law or rule or regulation.

“**Sensitive information**” means any data which, if published by the Town 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.

“**Publishable data**” means data which is not protected or sensitive and which has been prepared for release to the public.

Section 3: Open Data Program

The Town commits to develop and implement practices that will allow it to:

- Proactively release publishable Town 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;
- Publish high quality, updated data with documentation (metadata) and permanence to encourage maximum use;
- Provide or support access to free, historical archives of all released Town data;
- Measure the effectiveness of datasets made available through the Open Data Program by connecting open data efforts to the Town's programmatic priorities;
- Minimize limitations on the disclosure of public information while appropriately safeguarding protected and sensitive information;
- Support innovative uses of the Town's publishable data by agencies, the public, and other partners.

The development and implementation of these practices shall be overseen by the Open Data Administrator, reporting to the Town Manager. Appropriate funding shall be made available to achieve the goals of this program.

Section 4: Open Data Leadership Team

In order to support this initiative, the Town will develop an Open Data Leadership Team that consists of representatives from each department within the organization, an Open Data Administrator, and the Town Manager. Implementation of the Open Data Program will be overseen by the Open Data Administrator and work with the Leadership Team and any associated departments and agencies to:

- Maintain an Open Data Guidebook for use by all Town staff responsible for management, review, or publication of data;
- Identify and publish appropriate contact information for an open data coordinator who will be responsible for managing that department's participation in the Open Data Program;
- Oversee the creation and maintenance of a comprehensive inventory of datasets held by each Town department in conjunction with Town IT staff which is published to the central open data location and is regularly updated;
- Review and determine the relative level of risk and public benefit associated with potentially sensitive, non-protected information based on the annual security audit done by Town IT staff so as to make a determination about whether and how to publish it;
- Develop and implement a process for prioritizing the release of datasets which takes into account new and existing signals of interest from the public (such as the frequency of public records requests), the Town's programmatic priorities, existing opportunities for data use in the public interest, and cost;
- Proactively consult with members of the public, agency staff, journalists, researchers, and other stakeholders to identify the datasets which will have the greatest benefit to Town residents if published in a high quality manner;
- 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;
- Ensure that appropriate metadata is provided for each dataset in order to facilitate its use;
- Develop and oversee a routinely updated, public timeline for new dataset publication;

- Make recommendations for historical document inclusion and define a schedule for approved historical document publication;
- Ensure that published datasets are available for bulk download and/or available via public application programming interfaces (APIs) without legal encumbrance.

To increase and improve use of the Town's open data, the Data Administrator will actively encourage agency and public participation by providing regular opportunities for feedback and collaboration.

Section 4: Open Data Portal

The Town will create and maintain a publicly available location on the Town's website or in another suitable online location where the Town's published data will be available for download. 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.

Each published dataset should be associated with contact information for the appropriate manager of that dataset as well as with a file layout or data dictionary that provides information about field labels and values. Town departments will specify a recommended data citation form available for viewing on the central online location for published Town data to encourage responsible reuse of Town data.

Section 5: Open Data Report and Review

Within one year of the effective date of this policy, the Open Data Administrator shall publish an annual Open Data Report on the Town website and review the report with the Town Council during, at minimum, one Council retreat per year. The report shall include:

- an assessment of progress towards achievement of the goals of the Town's Open Data Program;
- an assessment of how the Town's open data work has furthered or will further the Town's strategic goals and priorities;
- a summary of any public benefit associated with the publication or release of the data
- a description and publication timeline for datasets envisioned to be published by the Town in the following year;
- a list and descriptions of datasets that have been published by the Town in the prior year.

Additionally, the Open Data Administrator should also oversee a review process for improving the Town's open data management based on reviews from the Leadership Team, as well as suggestions from public and internal staff, to ensure the Town continues to move towards the achievement of the program's goals. Public feedback for this review process will be collected during Open Data Community Meetings held by the Open Data Administrator.