



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Ed Shikada  
Assistant City Manager

**SUBJECT:** PUBLIC DATA INITIATIVE

**DATE:** May 28, 2013

Approved

Date

5/29/13

## RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to launch a Public Data Initiative by:

1. Deploying an open data feed pilot,
2. Drafting an administrative Public Data Policy,
3. Developing a outcome based service delivery action strategy, and
4. Returning to Rules Committee in January 2014 with a report on progress toward the above three deliverables and what will be required (staffing, technology, etc.) to scale beyond the pilot.

## BACKGROUND

In response to the Mayor's March 2013 Budget Message directing the City Manager to prepare a San Jose public data initiative, this Manager's Budget Addendum lays out recommended principles, an initial work plan, and an estimated budget needed to successfully launch a Public Data Initiative this year. The purpose of the proposed initiative is two fold:

1. Increase open and transparent public access to relevant data regarding City services in a format that third party developers can use for further analysis, and
2. Enhance the City's use of data to improve service delivery and to engage the community in the work of creating a better City.

The proposed initiative will include ways for the public and staff to easily find, and access a range of data sets, as well as tools to assist in visualizing, analyzing, and applying the information in the data sets. In addition to provision of data, a key component of the initiative is deploying a reliable on-line and mobile platform for residents to report issues of concern, and have service requests connected directly and automatically into the City's work order and service delivery systems.

## ANALYSIS

### **Principles**

In preparing to identify the appropriate next phase in the City's use of data and analytics, City staff has considered recent Council discussion of data analytics as well as reviewed lessons learned from other organizations. The six suggested principles for implementing what some other cities have referred to as an "open government" initiative in San José are; lean start up approach, community facing, organizational readiness, back end sustainability, pilot to learn, and smart use of competitive process to scale.

1. *Lean Startup Approach* - Start with small, measurable, and meaningful actions to open existing data sets, and iterate rapidly based on user feedback to expand and improve the initiative. This approach avoids the pitfall of trying to design a comprehensive system and implement everything all at once, only to find that it does not meet user needs.

2. *Community Facing* - Select data sets and applications based on their ability to benefit community priorities. There are hundreds, if not thousands of data sets throughout the City, while ideally, over time, almost all of those will be easily available, this years efforts should focus exclusively on those data sets of broad interest to the community.

3. *Organizational readiness* - making data feeds available will naturally and appropriately increase public desire for changes in service based on the newly available information. Those parts of the organization are capable of adapting to this as an opportunity to learn and improve service delivery should be the first selected for the pilot.

4. *Back end sustainability* - Any data set made available to staff and the public needs to have a sustainable and reliable method for keeping the data updated in as close to real time as possible. As a corollary for those data sets that are more static, it may be sufficient to provide the information on-line in a simple format such as a spreadsheet that can easily downloaded and analyzed, rather than needing to develop a more complicated interface. Also related to back end sustainability is the need for any user input to connect automatically to the appropriate people or work order systems with out the need for a human operator to route calls, emails or requests.

5. *Pilot to learn* - The initiative should be considered a pilot to allow for active experimentation with new techniques and approaches. This will likely include carving out temporary exemptions from standard practices or existing policy to allow for a more flexible approach to testing out innovative ideas.

6. *Smart use of competitive process to scale* - meeting the ultimate goal of replicating and scaling across the organization will likely require procurement of new systems, software, or other tools. The work during the pilot phase should all be done with an eye toward the use of competitive processes in scaling the eventual solution. It is especially important to be able to use a quick competitive process given the wide range of new start ups and applications in the civic engagement and open data space.

### **Work Plan**

The initial work plan will focus on three deliverables: open data feed pilot, administrative public data policy, and an action strategy for deploying applications and tools to connect residents directly to the delivery of key city services.

### ***Open Data Feed Pilot***

The open data feed pilot would be launched immediately and consist of providing access to real time information on 3-5 data sets of expressed community interest. These data sets might include: graffiti, dispatch information for fire, medical and police, airport noise, code enforcement cases, and development permits. In several cases the data would have to be automatically scrubbed to exclude private information. In addition to the raw data, the pilot would include experimentation with free publicly available analytical tools to assist in understanding, visualizing, and analyzing the data sets.

### ***Administrative Public Data Policy***

To provide a policy framework for these efforts the administration will develop a concise open government policy that provides guidance on privacy issues, format, and accessibility of data sets and supports the rapid deployment of approaches that open data to the public and staff.

### ***Outcome Based Services Delivery Action Strategy***

Even more important than the provision of data, is the ability to analyze and use it to understand and improve service delivery in the City. The action strategy will lay out a rapid competitive approach to deploying an on-line, mobile enabled, all in one platform that would allow residents and staff clear, direct access to real time information on a range of key city services, including reporting issues, tracking of requests, and follow up. The platform would link directly to existing work order systems and delivery of those services, and will form the back bone for the entire open government system.

### **Budget**

The initial effort of deploying an open data feed pilot, developing an administrative open government policy and an action strategy for deploying a service data, reporting, and feedback platform will be conducted with existing resources. The report to Rules committee in January 2014 will include an estimate of any additional budget and staffing and training needed to implement the action plan and scale from pilot to full implementation.

### **COORDINATION**

This memorandum was prepared in coordination with the departments of Airport, Police, Fire, Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, and Information Technology.

/s/

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