OPEN DATA PROGRAM POLICY

WHEREAS, the City of Lancaster (hereafter, "the City" possesses large amounts of data; and

WHEREAS, the thoughtful implementation of an open data program increases access to public information; and

WHEREAS, access to public information promotes a higher level of civic engagement, improves transparency, enhances coordination and efficiencies among the City's departments, partner organizations and citizens while also fostering communication; and

WHEREAS, an open data policy allows the City to proactively provide information currently sought through public records requests, thereby saving the City time and money; and

WHEREAS, in commitment to the spirit of open government, the City is establishing this Open Data Program and promulgating this Open Data Policy to proactively publish selected data and data containing information, consistent with relevant public records law; and

WHEREAS, this policy is intended to assure that the protection of privacy, confidentiality and security will be maintained as a paramount priority while also advancing the government's transparency and accountability through the publication of open data.

POLICY

Section 1: Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for an open data program in the City of Lancaster. The city collects and creates information on aspects of life in Lancaster. Through this program, the public as well as internal departments and bureaus, will have faster and easier access to data and information via an online portal. The city recognizes that making data available in this way increases civic engagement, internal efficiencies, and transparency, while also fostering communication. It is also anticipated that this will improve government efficiency for those responsible for carrying out Pennsylvania Right-To-Know Law and other public record requests. Data will be released in a responsible manner, consistent with relevant public records law, and in consultation with the appropriate department staff and heads. The information will be released in machine-readable formats. Finally, the protection of privacy, confidentiality and security will be maintained as a paramount priority while also advancing the government's transparency and accountability through publication of open data.

Section 2: Definitions

1. "Data" means statistical, factual, quantitative, or qualitative information that is maintained or created by or on behalf of the City.
2. "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. "Legal encumbrance" includes federal copyright protections and other, non-statutory legal limitations on how or under what conditions a dataset may be used.

3. "Machine-readable" means data in a format that can be automatically read and processed by a computer, (such as CSV). Machine-readable data is structured data.
4. "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.
5. "Protected information" means any dataset or portion thereof to which an agency may deny access pursuant to the Pennsylvania Right-To-Know Law or any other law or rule or regulation.
6. "Sensitive information" means any data which, if published by the City 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.
7. "Publishable data" means data which is not protected information or sensitive information and which has been prepared for release to the public.

Section 3: Open Data Practices

a. The City commits to develop and implement practices that will allow it to:
1. Proactively release all publishable 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 updated publishable data with documentation (metadata) and permanence to encourage maximum use;
3. Provide or support access to free, historical archives of all published data;
4. Measure the effectiveness of datasets made available through the Open Data Program by connecting open data efforts to the City's programmatic priorities;
5. Improve access to publishable data while appropriately safeguarding protected and sensitive information; and
6. Support innovative uses of the City's publishable data.
b. The development and implementation of these practices shall be overseen by the Director of Administrative Services or their designee.
c. This Policy Order applies to all City departments, offices, administrative units, commissions, boards, advisory committees and divisions of City government (sometimes referred to herein as "agency"), and to the records of third party contractors that create or acquire information, records, or data on behalf of any of the same.
d. Appropriate funding shall be made available to achieve the goals of this program.

Section 4: Governance

a. Implementation of the Open Data Program will be overseen by the Director of Administrative Services, who will:
1. Oversee the creation of a comprehensive inventory of datasets held by each City agency which to be published as publishable and is regularly updated;
2. Develop and implement a process for determining the relative level of risk and public benefit associated with potentially sensitive, non-protected data so as to make a determination about whether and how to publish it;
3. Develop and implement a process for prioritizing the publication of datasets which

takes into account new and existing signals of interest from the public (such as the frequency of public records requests), the City's programmatic priorities, existing opportunities for data use in the public interest, and cost;

4. 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 City residents if published;
5. Establish for ensuring that datasets are, up-to-date, are in use-appropriate formats, and exclude protected and sensitive information;
6. Develop and oversee a routinely updated, public timeline for new dataset publication; and
7. Make recommendations for historical document inclusion, and define a schedule for approved historical document publication
8. Ensure that published datasets are available for bulk download and/or available via public application programming interfaces (APIs) without legal encumbrance.

b. In order to increase and improve use of the City's open data, the City will actively encourage agency and public participation by providing regular opportunities for feedback and collaboration.
c. In order to foster intentionality of the open data program, the Director of Administrative Services shall annually review and reflect on the open data management processes and may at any point make suggestions for improving the City's open data management processes.

Section 5: Central Online Location for Published Data

a. The City will [create and] maintain a publicly available location on the City's website or in another suitable online location where the City's published data will be available for download.
b. Each published dataset should be associated with contact information.