

Clause 11 in Report No. 14 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on October 19, 2017.

11

2017 Open Data Program Update

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendation contained in the report dated September 29, 2017 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services:

1. Council receive this report for information.
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Report dated September 29, 2017 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services now follows:

1. Recommendation

It is recommended that Council receive this report for information.

2. Purpose

This report provides an update on York Region's Open Data program and actions to move forward. Attachment 1 provides an update on data released to date and identified for release through to the end of 2018.

3. Background

The Open Data Program releases government data to the public

Open data is the release of government data in a machine readable format for download and use by the public without restriction. Making government data available enables the broader public sector, private sector businesses and non-government organizations to access and add value to data, rather than duplicating it, thereby reducing costs.

Open data increases transparency, promotes understanding of government and fosters greater trust by proactively making data broadly available to everyone. It helps to raise the regional government's profile as a self-serve trusted source of data.

Council approved York Region's Open Data program in 2013

A one-year pilot project started in 2012, leading to a Council approved Open Data program on September 26, 2013. It has since been adopted as part of the Vision 2051 goal of Open and Responsive Governance and as a strategic priority in the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan with the performance measure to increase the number of data sets available on the Region's website.

175 datasets have been released to the public

Open data can be accessed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week from www.york.ca/opendata. This website provides program information, the open data license agreement and a link to the catalogue of published open data.

There are now 175 datasets released including core mapping datasets (roads, addresses and parcels). Also available are public health inspection results, transit routes and schedules, transit disruptions, population estimates and the operating budget. The Open Data release plan (Attachment 1) provides a complete list of the data currently released and data identified for release through to the end of 2018.

A publication process for release of data is in place to protect privacy

Datasets to be published on the Open Data website are reviewed for privacy, confidentiality and intellectual property restrictions. A team of representatives from all Regional departments, including the Regional Clerk, reviews each candidate dataset to determine if the value of releasing the data warrants the publication effort. The group also recommends communications required and facilitates the review process within each department. Data descriptions are prepared and published with the data, to help users understand the data being released thereby reducing the likelihood of any potential misinterpretation.

Datasets to be released over a 5 year period from 2014 - 2018 are identified in the Open Data release plan

The Open Data release plan is updated annually through consultation with each department. The focus is to release datasets of known or demonstrated value with immediate priority given to those already available to the public. Currently in its 4th year, the Open Data release plan (Attachment 1) identifies datasets that

have been released and will be updated on an annual basis. Consultation is underway to develop the next five year plan 2019-2024 to be released in 2018.

4. Analysis and Implications

The number of downloads from York Region’s Open Data website is increasing by 30% every year

Data has been downloaded nearly 28,250 times from the Open Data website since 2012. The most downloaded datasets are land parcels, roads, municipal boundaries, address points and building footprint mapping data. The York Region business directory and YorkSafe food premise inspection results are the most often downloaded non-mapping data.

Table 1 shows the number of downloads from the Region’s Open Data website by year. Annual downloads are increasing by an average of 30%, indicating a growing use and popularity of the Open Data program. Current statistics up to August 31, 2017 show annual growth is on track to increase from an average of 30% per year to 70% for 2017 with 60% of the growth being attributed to the increased use of existing datasets and 40% to new datasets being added within the last year.

Table 1
Number of Downloads from Open Data Website 2012 – Aug 31 / 2017

| Year | Downloads | Yearly % Increase |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Mid-October – end 2012 | 784 | |
| 2013 | 3325 | |
| 2014 | 4413 | +33% |
| 2015 | 5625 | +27% |
| 2016 | 7339 | +30% |
| 2017 (end-August) | 6798 | +70% to date |
| | ~28250 | |

York Region provides data of value to the public by collaborating with popular online services

The Open Data program seeks to establish data partnerships to create live value-added feedback loops between citizens, popular online services and regional staff. In 2017, York Region collaborated with Waze, the world’s largest community-based traffic and navigation app, to incorporate the Region’s traffic

disruption data into their app while incorporating their community-sourced insights back into our traffic management centre.

Including traffic disruptions in Waze and other popular navigation tools supports the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan objective of managing traffic congestion, which improves residents' quality of life and enables economic benefit. Including community-sourced traffic disruptions in the Regional traffic management centre helps improve our situational intelligence and supports the Vision 2051 goal of Interconnected Systems for Mobility.

In 2016, York Region collaborated with Yelp to incorporate food premise inspection results into Yelp's local business search tool that publishes crowd-sourced reviews. Including public health inspection results in Yelp and other popular review sites provides the opportunity to extend the public reach of inspection results to Yelp's larger audience, and improve the compliance of food establishments with safe food-handling practices.

The focus in 2017 was on increasing the awareness of Open Data

To help increase awareness and engagement within the Region, a series of meetings with each department was held. The focus of the meetings was on sharing positive community impact stories where Open Data was used, which resulted in additional datasets being added to the 2019-2024 release plan. To help mature the program and meet the needs of users, a public event will be held in late 2017 with a focus on identifying potential datasets the community would like the Region to release.

The Open Data Program also held multiple brainstorming sessions with our stakeholders to understand what we might do to increase Open Data participation within the Region. Three key recommendations were identified: (a) empower internal users to submit and edit their own Open Data, (b) empower web visitors to view and analyze data on the website, such as exploring the annual [drinking water report](#), and, (c) create a community where users can share stories inspired by Open Data.

In 2018, the focus will be on addressing the key recommendations through platform enhancements centered on usability and open analytics. Continued participation in benchmarking initiatives will also be a focus to keep staff informed of innovations in the global Open Data community. Feedback will be used to develop an Open Data Plan to help guide us through the next five years.

5. Financial Considerations

The Open Data program is funded under the Data, Analytics and Visualization Services Branch in the approved 2017 Corporate Services operating budget.

6. Local Municipal Impact

York Region staff support local municipalities interested in advancing their Open Data programs by sharing best practices and lessons learned. In 2018, there will be continued discussions for federated access to local municipal data with the goal of achieving one view for local staff and the taxpayer to search, interact with and share stories created from local Open Data.

Growth of an Open Data community in York Region relies heavily on partnerships with the local municipalities. Opportunities such as website integration, knowledge sharing and public events will be a focus in 2018.

7. Conclusion

Council approved an Open Data program for York Region on September 26, 2013. The Open Data program makes York Region's data easily available to the public, other government agencies and the private sector. It helps raise the profile of regional government as a trusted self-serve source of data. The nearly 28,250 downloads since the Open Data website was launched indicates the community finds the self-serve approach to accessing the Region's data useful. Additional datasets will continue to be reviewed and released to popular websites and applications used by the public.

For more information on this report, please contact John Houweling, Director, Data, Analytics and Visualization Services at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71529.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

September 29, 2017

Attachment (1)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

| Datasets Released to Date | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Business and Economy | York Region Business Directory (multiple years) |
| | York Region Capital Plan |
| | York Region Operating Budget |
| | York Region Operating Revenue |
| Environment | 2009 Colour Shaded Relief |
| | 2011 Contours - 1 meter and 5 meter |
| | Benchmarks, Vertical Control |
| | Broader Public Sector Energy Reporting 397-11 |
| | Clean Water Act Aquifer Vulnerability Scores |
| | Forested Areas |
| | Regional Forest Boundary |
| | Regionally Owned Street Trees |
| | Sewer Bylaw Surcharge Agreement Holders |
| | Waste Management Diversion Report Statistics |
| | Wellhead Protection Areas |
| Government | 2001, 2006 and 2011 Census Statistic Tables (m |
| | Address Points |
| | Building Footprints |
| | Municipal Boundary |
| | Parcels (property lines) |
| | Population and Household Estimate by Local Municipality |
| | Regional Official Plan – Population & Employment Forecasts |
| | Solid Waste Sites |
| | Web Mapping Services Application Programming Interface |
| | York Region Official Plan Mapping Data (multiple) |
| | York Region Open Data Release Listing |
| Health and Public Safety | Annual Drinking Water Systems Data Report |
| | Beach Water Testing Results |
| | Early Development Instrument (EDI) Neighbourhood Boundaries & Results |
| | Hospital Locations |
| | York Region Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) Sites |
| | YorkSafe Public Health Inspections Results |
| Recreation | Bike Paths |
| | York Region Public Event Listing |
| Transportation | Cordon Count Data |
| | Red Light Camera Locations |
| | Traffic Disruptions |
| | Regionally Owned Roads |
| | Road Network |
| | Transportation Tomorrow Survey Results |
| | York Region Transit Monthly Ridership Data |
| | York Region Transit/VIVA Real-Time Service Alerts, Vehicle Location and Trip Updates |
| | York Region Transit/VIVA Schedules |

| 2017 Q4 & 2018 Datasets Proposed for Release | |
|---|---|
| Business and Economy | Capital Plan Financing Sources (Revenue Sources) |
| | External Job Postings |
| | Historical / Actual Assessment Growth Information |
| | Human Resources Recruitment Statistics |
| | Total Investment Portfolio Returns |
| Environment | Aquifer High Vulnerability |
| | Environmental Compliance Approvals & Permits to Take Water |
| | Intake Protection Zones |
| | Rain Gauge Locations |
| Government | Family Composition and Low Income Census Tables |
| | Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests Annual Report Statistics |
| | Social Media Analytics |
| | York.ca User Statistics |
| Health and Public Safety | Breastfeeding Clinic Locations |
| | Dental Screening Program locations |
| | Disease/Accident: Hospitalizations, Emergency Room Visits and Mortality Rates |
| | Extreme Heat Alert |
| | Live Births |
| | Mood Disorder/Depression: Hospitalizations and Emergency Room Visits |
| | Needle Exchange Locations |
| | Prenatal Class Locations |
| | Sexual Health Clinic Locations |
| | Teen Pregnancies (subject to release guidelines) |
| | Infrastructure |
| Current Environmental Assessments | |
| Transportation | Annual Average Daily Traffic Counts (AADT) |
| | Number of Lanes on Regional Roads |
| | Speed Zones |
| | Traffic Data |