APPENDIX A

Winnipeg

CITY OF WINNIPEG POLICY NO. XXX-XXX

POLICY TITLE *Open Government Policy*	**ADOPTED BY** *City Council*	**EFFECTIVE DATE** *XXXXXXXX*
ORIGIN / AUTHORITY *Council*	**CITY POLICY NO**	**MOST RECENT CONSOLIDATION** *XXX-XXX*

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is to set out a framework to make the Public Service, in the words of the Open Government Partnership, more open, accountable, and responsive to its citizens. The objectives set out in this Policy are to be achieved by applying four core principles of Open Government to specific action items, which may be implemented in furtherance of those objectives.

Open Government means different things to different people, and is perhaps best understood by reference to its desired objectives. As reflected by the Open Government Partnership, a leading international resource organization, Open Government applies principles of participation, transparency, collaboration and accountability to address civic challenges:

- Improving public services;
- Increasing public integrity;
- More effectively managing public resources;
- Creating safer communities; and
- Increasing corporate accountability.

There is no one path to these objectives. Every government must find its own way toward what ultimately amounts to better governance practices and decision-making, through increased accountability and transparency. These principles, together with public participation and the use of technology and innovation, form the engine which drives Open Government and leads toward better outcomes for both government and its citizens.

As a guiding principle, all desired outcomes should conform to the following criteria which have been established by the Open Government Partnership:

- **Specific:** The commitment precisely describes the problem it is trying to solve, the activities it comprises and the expected outcomes.
- **Measurable:** It is possible to verify the fulfillment of the commitment. Where commitments have multiple sub-commitments, they are broken into clear, measurable milestones.
- **Answerable:** The commitment clearly specifies the main implementing agency, the coordinating or supporting agencies where relevant, and if necessary, other civil society, multilateral, or private sector partners who have a role in implementing the commitment.

- **Relevant:** For each commitment, the action plan should explain its relevance to one or more of the Open Government principles outlined by the Open Government Partnership (transparency, accountability, public participation and technology and innovation).
- **Time-bound:** The commitment clearly states the date when it will be completed, as well as dates for milestones, benchmarks and any other deadline.

Action taken under this Policy should also be realistic and take into account:.

- City's obligations with respect to the privacy and confidentiality of its citizens and businesses;
- Potential exposure to liability;
- Constraints on resources (including both personnel and fiscal resources); and
- Acknowledgement of an existing corporate culture, which may need to adapt to principles of Open Government.

These objectives, as with the Policy itself, are not intended to be static. Rather, they are anticipated to be organic in nature, as their contours will continue to be shaped by dialogue with both citizens and City departments. The principles which are set out in this Policy are non-exhaustive. New ideas and outcomes may, and should, develop over time.

Open Government presents a philosophical approach toward the attainment of six key benefits, which were identified by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) at its 2010 Open Government Summit:

- Establishing greater trust in government;
- Ensuring better outcomes at less cost;
- Raising compliance levels;
- Ensuring equity of access to public policy making;
- Fostering innovation and new economic activity; and
- Enhancing effectiveness by leveraging knowledge and resources of citizens.

2. Definitions:

2.1 **"Open Data"** means structured data that is machine-readable, free to use, re-use and share, subject only to an attribution requirement and a liability disclaimer.

2.2 **"Open Government".** The OECD defines Open Government as: "The transparency of government actions, the accessibility of government services and information, and the responsiveness of government to new ideas, demands and needs." (OECD, *Modernising Government: The Way Forward.*)

More broadly, Open Government is based on the premise that citizens are entitled to know about, and have access to, government proceedings and documents. That knowledge and access must be granted in a manner which allows for meaningful public participation in the civic decision-making process. Citizens must both understand the substantive content of that process, together with its procedural aspects. Open Government recognizes that transparency and technological innovation increases citizen engagement, which in turn increases accountability and leads to better outcomes.

3. Open Government Policy:

This policy applies to all City of Winnipeg employees.

Principles

The objectives which are set out in this Policy are driven by reference to the four core Open Government principles which have been established by the Open Government Partnership:

- ***Transparency:*** *This includes publication of all government-held information (as opposed to only information on government activities); proactive or reactive releases of information; mechanisms to strengthen the right to information; and open access to government information.*
- ***Accountability:*** *There are rules, regulations and mechanisms in place that call upon government to justify their actions, act upon criticisms or requirements made of them, and accept responsibility for failure to perform with respect to laws or commitments. Commitments on accountability should typically include an answerability element, i.e. that they are not purely internal systems of accountability but involve the public.*
- ***Participation:*** *Governments seek to mobilize citizens to engage in a dialogue on government policies or programs, provide input or feedback, and make contributions that lead to more responsive, innovative and effective governance.*
- ***Technology and Innovation:*** *Governments embrace the importance of providing citizens with open access to technology, the role of new technologies in driving innovation, and the importance of increasing the capacity of citizens to use technology. E-government initiatives are welcome, but in order to be relevant to OGP, action plans should explain how these initiatives advance government transparency, accountability and/or public participation.*[1]

Each of these principles are interconnected. Measures which target transparency may lead to increased accountability, while technological and innovation advances may increase citizen participation, and so on.

3.1 Transparency

Transparency is premised on free flows of information and total clarity as to the decision-making process. This means the Public Service should:

- Make its services easier to access and understand;
- Provide information and decisions openly and freely, and on a timely basis, subject only to legislative and contractual restrictions with respect to privacy and confidentiality;
- Explain its decision-making processes, as well as the subject matter of the decision itself;
- Avoid restricting how information may be used and re-used; and
- Treat information as a public resource, to be shared for everyone's benefit.

3.2 Accountability

[1] Open Government Partnership, *OGP National Action Plan Guidance Note*.

Accountability requires the Public Service to explain and account for its actions. This means the Public Service should:

- Articulate and explain desired outcomes;
- Provide a complete record of its activities and decisions to citizens;
- Track the outcomes of its decisions;
- Maintain oversight mechanisms to self-analyze its actions, and share those results with citizens; and
- Offer citizens meaningful opportunities to critique and analyze the Public Service's performance.

3.3 Participation

Participation focuses on dialogue, with a view toward effective outcomes that are informed by, and responsive to, input from citizens. Citizens should have an opportunity for meaningful participation in the civic decision-making process. This means the Public Service should:

- Provide citizens information, opportunities and resources which promote understanding of key issues and the processes by which those issues will be decided;
- Act in an inclusive and non-discriminatory manner which reduces barriers to participation; and
- Incorporate citizen feedback into the decision-making process.

3.4 Technology and Innovation

Technology and Innovation refers to the use of leading developments to further the other principles which are set out in this Policy, together with the objectives of Open Government, generally. This means the Public Service should:

- Explore new policies and practices, both in terms of technological processes and creative substantive content;
- Implement analytical and other tools which foster unique solutions to issues;
- Develop processes which increase citizen education and understanding;
- Use innovation to promote access to involvement in civic decision-making; and
- Combine efficiency and sustainability in its practices.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Chief Administrative Officer

The position responsible to administer this policy is the Chief Administrative Officer, including ongoing reviews of this policy. The Chief Administrative Officer will create an administrative standard to govern actions of the Public Service.

4.2 Director of Customer Service and Communication

This position is responsible for the delivery of public communication and the Office of Public Engagement, and therefore will be responsible for implementing the portions of the policy that relate to public participation and public communication of materials.

4.3 Chief Innovation Officer

This position is responsible for technology and innovation at the City of Winnipeg, and specifically administration of the Open Data Portal. Therefore this position will be responsible for coordinating efforts to ensure more information is available through the use of technology and innovation.