Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – December 8, 2021

REPORTS

Item No. 6 Open Government Policy Annual Review

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to Council:

1. That this report be received as information.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Gilroy,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Yea:	Allard, Browaty, Gillingham, Gilroy, Mayes, Rollins	6
Nay:		0

Carried

COUNCIL DECISION:

On February 22, 2017, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the City of Winnipeg Open Government Policy (Appendix A) be approved, and the Public Service be directed to report back annually on Open Government Policy implementation at the City of Winnipeg.

2. That the Proper Officers at the City of Winnipeg be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Open Government Annual Review

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
F. Wiltshire	F. Wiltshire	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 15, 2017, Council approved the City of Winnipeg Open Government Policy, which provides a framework for the Public Service to continue to move towards being more open, transparent, and accountable.

The Open Government Annual Review aims to provide a summary of the work that has been done to date on Open Government in the City of Winnipeg, and to outline work that is ongoing and planned for the future.

Key achievements over the past year include:

- Winnipeg was ranked as the third most open North American city on the Open Cities Index for 2020, having increased our score from 75% to 96%.
- The expansion and continued improvement of virtual public engagement sessions as a way of safely engaging with the public when traditional in-person engagement sessions were no longer an option – including the addition of live polls, question and answer periods, breakout groups, and facilitated discussions with online participants.
- The launch of 33 new data sets on the City's Open Data Portal.
- The launch of a Council Vote Information System website which is powered by Open Data.

The objectives set out in the Policy are not intended to be static, but rather they are anticipated to be organic in nature as they will continue to be shaped by dialogue with both citizens and City departments. The principles and action items in the Policy are non-exhaustive, as new ideas and outcomes will continue to develop over time

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On February 15, 2017, Council adopted the following recommendation:

"That Council approves the City of Winnipeg Open Government Policy (Appendix A) and direct the Public Service to report back annually on Open Government Policy implementation at the City of Winnipeg".

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications of the recommendations as the report is to be received as information.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Over the past decade, citizens have been passionate about informing themselves on local community issues and engaging in government policy. Direct access to information and openness and transparency at all levels of government is being demanded in order to empower citizens.

On March 20, 2013, Council adopted an Open Data Initiative which endorsed the principles of providing the greatest amount of Open and Accessible Data that could be shared with citizens, businesses and other jurisdictions while respecting privacy and security concerns.

On June 25, 2014, Council approved the report "Open Government Initiative - Improvements to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Process" which directed the Winnipeg Public Service to implement a new process for Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) requests. This process would focus on the concepts of openness and transparency in providing government data, while ensuring privacy and security of data for citizens and businesses, in keeping with the Open Data Initiatives adopted by Council.

On September 16, 2015, Executive Policy Committee (EPC) requested that the Public Service conduct a review of all city data sharing and identify opportunities to apply a machine-readable format along with a review of security and privacy considerations and report back. The Public Service's report on the matter was received as information at the February 10, 2016, meeting of EPC.

On November 25, 2015, Council approved a report outlining leading open government initiatives in other jurisdictions and broad recommendations on next steps for the City of Winnipeg in implementing open government principles.

On November 18, 2015, the Chief Administrative Officer was directed to implement an open government policy across all Departments in the City of Winnipeg, and to develop an Action Plan for Council's endorsement within 6 months.

On July 13, 2016, Council approved the Open Government Action Plan and directed the Winnipeg Public Service was directed to report back on an Open Government Policy by February 2017.

On February 15, 2017, Council approved the City of Winnipeg Open Government Policy and directed the public service to report back annually on open government initiatives that have been undertaken.

The first annual review was provided to Council on September 27, 2017, and has continued on an annual basis since then.

2021 Annual Update

Over the past year, significant work has been done to increase the amount of information available to the public, with 33 new data sets having been made available on the City's Open Data Portal. All data on the Open Data portal has been released as JSON, XML, and CSV formats, which are universal general standards for machine readability. The City worked with Decision Works to host an Open Data Hackathon, which was open to members of the public at no charge. Winnipeg is also now ranked as the third most open North American city on the Open Cities Index for 2020 and continues to push forward with its Open Data initiatives.

Among the new datasets published were the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Call Logs, Trade Permits, and Council Voting data. Also, the Linear Reference System (LRS) Road Network was released, which is a foundational geospatial dataset. This data allows for the publishing of many different types of datasets in relation to our roadways; for example, speed limits and street classifications.

The COVID-19 pandemic also provided opportunities to proactively share information with residents with the publication of the COVID-19 By-Law Enforcement dataset which allowed members of the public to view the number of positive interactions, warnings, and tickets issued by Community Services Ambassadors while enforcing orders under Parks By-Laws.

The Office of Public Engagement (OPE) continued to improve virtual and alternative ways of engaging safely as traditional in-person engagement sessions continued to be impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Ensuring participation was available once residents were ready to have conversations was a priority and those opportunities were made available through means such as online tools, share packages, and outdoor events. OPE also held virtual events with live polls, question and answer periods, breakout groups, and facilitated discussions. Since the onset of the pandemic, we have hosted 88 virtual events.

The delivery of corporate training by the Access and Privacy Office on employee obligations under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)* and *Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)* was paused temporarily (along with many other training sessions) due to COVID-19. The Office took the opportunity to research and develop content for online training modules. That work continues with the launch of various modules expected in 2022. PHIA training resumed through remote learning sessions to support operations for the City's COVID-19 vaccination verification and rapid testing efforts.

The Access and Privacy Office launched a new Privacy Impact Assessment tool in March 2021. The Office received and assessed 28 submissions (to date) in 2021, which is just over double the amount received and assessed in 2020. These assessments enable the City to ensure its legislated privacy obligations are met when new City programs, projects, and initiatives are developed.

Finally, the City continues to put a greater emphasis on redeveloping webpages to ensure they are responsive to all devices, and have more concise information. A redeveloped winnipeg.ca homepage and 311 self-service website were launched in the fall 2020, using a data-driven process to offer a better user experience, with a focus on delivering the information and services residents need most. We have continued to update the entire website, and have launched additional self-service forms. The 311 self-service website includes 18 bilingual service request forms, such as requesting snow removal or reporting issues with your Peggo card.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: November 20, 2021

Project Name:
Open Government Annual Review

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Electronically approved by
Jocelyn Peters
Manager of Finance (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Innovation, Transformation, and Technology Department
- City Clerk's Department

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Not applicable.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Not applicable.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Customer Service & Communications
Prepared by: F. Wiltshire, Director, Customer Service & Communications
Date: November 22, 2021

Attachments: