Open Data Policy

Ville de Montréal

June 2022

This document constitutes the city's official open data policy.

Revision History

Version	Date	Main changes
2.0	2022-06	• Addition of a commitment concerning the protection of privacy and the misuse of data. • Addition of a commitment concerning the prioritization and optimization of the usefulness of data for the community. • Review of definitions and clarification of guidelines. • Review of the responsibility of application of the policy, and removal of the deadline in favour of publishing data on an ongoing basis.
1.0	2015-12	First version of the policy.

Introduction

Montréal's municipal administration generates and manages vast quantities of data through its activities. These data represent significant digital assets for the city and its residents. With this policy, the city commits to freely sharing the data held in its trust so that everyone can access it and benefit from it. The publication of open data – an essential vector for transparency in municipal government and for citizen participation – generates multiple opportunities to contribute to the common good.

Objectives

The city adopted this policy to specify to its administrative units their duties relating to open data, and to explain to residents its commitments concerning access to and the use of municipal data. The policy specifies the guiding principles governing open data, along with the responsibilities associated with its application.

Organizational scope of the policy

This policy applies to all administrative units at the city, including central departments and boroughs, and to data related to activities that fall under the jurisdiction of the agglomeration. The city recommends the adoption of this policy by paramunicipal organizations and organizations included in its reporting entity. It also invites its partners and all stakeholders working on Montréal's economic, social and territorial development to do the same.

Definitions

Data: Representation of a unit of information, coded in a format that enables its processing by a computer. Data can be reused with software and reinterpreted based on the context of its analysis.

Open data: Data made available free of charge to the public under an open licence. Open data is meant to be easily accessible and available in open format.

Open format: Data format whose technical specifications are public so that the data is accessible with no technical, legal or financial restrictions.

Open licence: A licence that permits access to and the use and distribution of data, with little or no restriction.

Degree of openness: Authorized level of access for data held by the city. The degree of openness can take the following values:

- Open: The data is deemed public and freely accessible, and is thus subject to the regulations herein and the conditions set out in the open data licence.

- Restricted: Access to the data is restricted to certain clearly identified administrative units or partner organizations.

- Closed: Access to the data is limited to the administrative unit responsible for it.

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Guiding principles of data publication

1. Open by default: Any data collected or acquired by the city is considered open unless there is justification for restricting access to it.

2. The city publishes its data in compliance with the applicable laws, notably the [Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information](#).

3. The city shall undertake the means it deems reasonable to abide by principles of transparency and quality, as inspired by the Sunlight Foundation:

   3.1. Exhaustive: Data published by the city must be as complete as possible and reflect all that has been collated on a given subject.

   3.2. Primary: Published data includes original data collected and any available details concerning the manner in which the data were collected.

   3.3. Timeliness: Data made available are published or updated in a timely fashion.

   3.4. Ease of access: The data published are accessible to the broadest possible range of users and for the widest possible variety of uses.

   3.5. Machine readable: Data are readable through computer processing and are structured to allow automated processing.

   3.6. Non-discriminatory: Data are freely accessible to everyone, at any time, without prior justification or identification.

   3.7. Non-proprietary: Data are published in an open format and do not require a specific software to be used.

   3.8. Copyright-free: Open data are not subject to third-party copyrights, use of a patent, trademarks or trade secrets.

   3.9. Permanent: Once published, data remain accessible so as to promote the ability to access them over time, in accordance with the applicable data retention requirements.

   3.10. Free of charge: Data are published as collected, with no user fees.

Commitments

1. The city recognizes that open access to the data it produces and holds presents advantages in terms of transparency in the public administration, democratic and social life, economic development, and organizational efficiency.

2. The city commits to publishing its data on its open data Web site, gradually and continuously, while taking into account the costs, efforts and resources required for that purpose.

3. The city will prioritize the publication of data in order to maximize their usefulness and impact for the broader Montréal community. Where possible, priority placed on open data will be established based on their potential to contribute to the following elements:

   3.1. Respond to the needs and requests of residents.

   3.2. Improve public knowledge of the city's activities and commitments.

   3.3. Strengthen the city's accountability and the implementation of its strategic guidelines.

   3.4. Facilitate collaboration and the creation of new tools and knowledge.

   3.5. Promote the city's economic, social and ecological vitality.

   3.6. Create opportunities for improving the delivery of public services and the quality of life of residents.

4. The city commits to adopting the digital practices and solutions required to facilitate data sharing internally and with the community, and to ensure data quality.

5. The city commits to implementing automation mechanisms to ensure that data is updated at regular intervals.

6. The city commits to implementing all the means it deems necessary to protect the right to privacy and prevent the misuse of open data.

7. The city commits to establishing participation mechanisms with Montréal residents and data users in an effort to take into account their needs in relation to data publication processes.

8. The city commits to collaborating with the open data community to help advance standards and promote best practices, including compliance with local and international standards.

Data inventory and exceptions

1. The city commits to publishing an inventory of data held in its trust, regardless of their degree of openness, with the exception of data whose publication raises a public safety issue.

2. Justification must be provided for data that is not opened. The following reasons represent relevant justifications that must be documented for all data concerned:

    2.1 Respect for privacy and personal information.

    2.1.1 However, if data remains relevant once it is made anonymous, it should be published anonymously.

    2.2 Public safety and the safety of property.

    2.3 The city does not hold intellectual property rights or the right to republish data.

    2.4 The protection of third-party industrial secrets.

    2.5 All applicable laws, regulations or legal limitations.

Responsibilities concerning the application of the policy

As Chief data owner, the Direction générale has the ultimate authority to decide on the degree of openness of data held in the city's trust.

Each administrative unit is responsible for implementing the provisions of this policy in its activities and for ensuring that the policy is applied in accordance with the conditions specified in the Data Governance Directive.

The team responsible for coordinating open data publication will ensure that the commitments set out in this policy are fulfilled and that the data inventory is updated, and it will oversee the open data activities undertaken by administrative units.

Supporting documents

This policy draws on other relevant documents:

- The Data Governance Directive. This document describes the scope, objective and structure of data governance within the municipal administration.

- The open data publication guidelines published by Données Québec.

- This document lists the technical formats recommended for publishing different types of data.

- The inventory of data held in trust by the city.

- The open data licence chosen by the city, the Creative Commons license CC-BY 4.0.

- The Montréal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities.

- The Digital Data Charter. This document presents a set of ethical principles governing the management of data and their use at the city.

- The city's strategic plan (Montréal 2030) and digital strategy (Montréal numérique).

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