**Open Data Governance** is the process of providing oversight to an open data program, including measuring success, prioritizing data for release, ensuring public feedback is taken into account, and more. Many policies require the [designation of one or more people to be accountable](http://sunlightfoundation.com/opendataguidelines/#oversight-authority) for achieving the goals of an open data program. An **Open Data Governance Committee** is the group of people who lead that work.

GovEx’s recommendations for how the Open Data Governance Committee should operate are as follows:

**Committee Composition**

Executive sponsor; council members or designees (if legislators expect to be engaged on an ongoing basis); chief counsel or designee; public information officer or designee; agency/department data coordinators or other designated representatives; community members (see public engagement below). Many cities designate a Chief Data Officer or equivalent to chair the committee; other cities (like Tulsa, OK) allow committee members to vote annually for a chairperson.

**Meeting Frequency**

Committees should meet monthly. However, it may be necessary to gather on a bi-weekly or more frequent basis during critical phases of the program, such as before public launch or in preparation for a major announcement.

**Meeting Content**

Committees should conduct the following activities on a regular basis:

* Review new requests from the public for data
* Identify opportunities from other planned government work (e.g. major executive announcements or project launches)
* Prioritize work on datasets that should be prepared for public release
* Identify and mitigate risks on in-progress work on preparing data for public release, such as staffing and infrastructure capacity, data quality, and public communications.
* Review and approve datasets that are ready for release
* Review program metrics and adjust operating practices as needed (see Measuring Progress below)
* Respond to public questions or concerns (see Public Engagement below)

Especially during program startup or annual reviews, committees should also conduct the following activities:

* Review city strategic goals and align open data priorities and work to those goals.
* Create, review, or update internal publishing process documents such as workflow diagrams, data standards documentation, quality guidance, and use of automation tools.
* Create or review any periodic reports which may be required by policy.
* Recommend changes in policy.

**Measuring Progress**

Basic measures can provide some insight into the progress of the open data program.

* Datasets published. *Note: while this is helpful to demonstrate progress, GovEx does not recommend setting targets or measuring program success by this metric. Releasing hundreds of datasets is not the same thing as releasing hundreds of* ***valuable*** *datasets.*
* Site views and downloads. These metrics can show if the published data is being discovered and used. They are especially valuable when access by city employees can be separated from the general public.
* Data freshness. Tracks how many public datasets should have been updated compared to how many actually were.
* Public engagements. Tracks how government representatives engage with community members through events, social media, and other channels to discuss the available open data. This may include feedback mechanisms built into the open data site itself.
* Publishing Pipeline. Tracks how many datasets are being prepared for release at a time, and how long each one takes to go through the process.

**Public Engagement**

GovEx recommends that the public be directly involved in committee meetings, through one or more of the following:

* Include one or more members of the public as permanent positions on the committee.
* Invite community leaders to participate in committee meetings when discussing data relevant to those communities.
* Invite leaders of the local Code for America Brigade to participate regularly.

*Note: it may be appropriate for portions of committee meetings to take place without public participation, such as discussions of technology procurement, internal data inventories, security, and staffing.*

**Additional Information**

[GovEx Open Data Getting Started Guide](https://centerforgov.gitbooks.io/open-data-getting-started/content/governance-committee.html)