Accountability in the Information Age: A Study of Data Transparency in Local Governments

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ABSTRACT

Access to public data is vital to transparency and accountability of governments. While some cities, such as New York, have taken major strides towards this goal, there is no unified framework for evaluating openness of data at a local level. We address this problem by scoring openness of city data based on several factors, including ease of access, amount of data, recency, whether the data are up to date, etc. Using this metric, we aim to analyze and compare cities including Berkeley, Oakland, Santa Rosa, San Mateo and Palo Alto. This project should be a tool for citizens to hold their local officials accountable and demand better practices.

Nomenclature

S_T This will be the total score, without normalization.

S_N This will be the total score, normalized

1 Introduction

This section will include information on why this is necessary and what question we are trying to answer