

A2: Design and Implementation Plan  
LIS 2022: Implementing Information Needs

City of Pittsburgh Data Services Team  
Data Governance and Health Status Checks

Group 5, DataTrackers  
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## Description of the Problem

In 2014, the city of Pittsburgh enacted an Open Data Ordinance, which required all departments to conduct high-quality data management practices, including the creation of an Open Data Catalog; designating departmental Open Data Coordinators to update and maintain the catalog; and submitting annual Open Data Reports. The city of Pittsburgh's Data Services Team, which is part of the Department of Innovation and Performance (I&P), is responsible for supporting data governance and management for city departments. In 2020 the Data Services Team discovered that the city is not in compliance with the 2014 Open Data Ordinance and does not have procedures for prioritizing open data publication.

Our team is charged with designing a sustainable process, called Data Governance Health Status Checks, that will promote continuous updating of data inventories. Contextual inquiry interviews and modeling revealed several insights about how managers of city departments view data, their role with data, and the current processes in place for handling data. It is important to note that the city of Pittsburgh has a very diverse workforce with a diverse set of skills and perspectives. Although all managers support the Open Data Ordinance, they do not all believe that they have the resources, either time or skills, to comply with it. Also, many managers identify strongly as data users and not as data managers. We will take these concerns into consideration and address them as best we can through our design.

## Partner Feedback

Our group met with our partner to discuss our final report and receive his feedback. We discussed focusing on Right-to-Know (RTK) requests, publishing newsletters to record and share progress reports, creating a website application for entering and updating data inventories and sharing datasets, and developing and defining data procedures that would include a way to track progress and a plan to keep the open data project visible to managers with regular reminders to complete data inventories. Our partner agreed that the City of Pittsburgh should focus on publishing RTK requests and was pleased with the idea of a newsletter to report progress and keep the project visible. Our partner also liked the idea of a website application, however, he explained that they want to focus on the process before putting time and money into a web application as it would be both expensive and time-consuming. Finally, he approved the idea of developing and defining procedures for keeping up with data inventories and tracking progress. He noted that it would be beneficial to track the progress that is being made, however, permission to track RTK requests would have to be approved by the mayor's office. He was very appreciative of our work because it revealed challenges that the city needs to address, such as the fact that many managers identify

as data users and not data managers. He hopes that with clear procedures and guidelines, people's attitudes will change, because everyone manages data.

## Description of Product and Scope

Our group proposes to create a set of *procedures* for Data Governance Health Status Checks, and if time permits, *user documentation* for the Data Governance Health Status Checks *procedures*. It is notable that every department shares data with other departments, with other government agencies, and/or with the public per the Right-to-know (RTK) law. These shared datasets are strong candidates for open data publication. We propose that the city of Pittsburgh take advantage of the work that managers already do to prepare data for sharing.

The *procedures* for Data Governance Health Status Checks will include a 1-3 page document that provides guidance on what to do after departments get a handle on the data they have. For example, the *procedures* will address what data to make open, how to prioritize datasets, how often to hold meetings, and how to track progress to ensure data managers are upholding their responsibilities. Tracking progress will involve collecting data—approximately 8 to 12 variables, such as the description and identification date of each identified dataset, the date the dataset is added to the data inventory, the date the dataset is determined to be open, or not, and the date the dataset is published, if applicable—to enable the Data Services team to measure each department's progress over time. The *procedures* will also include a template for a newsletter that will act as a progress report. The newsletter will be 1-3 pages in length and will include information about what each department has accomplished, what datasets they've made open, and what data inventories are in progress. It will also display aggregate data in tables and charts, i.e., counts and percentages for each department and city-wide totals, that are based on the progress indicators from the data. As an incentive, the newsletter will also include a section that highlights one department per newsletter for their work or growth in open data efforts.

The Data Governance Health Status Checks *procedures* will define a sustainable process to promote continuous updating of data inventories and provide users with the information they need to engage with the process. The *procedures* will also assist those managing data in prioritizing open data and maintaining some consistency across departments in relation to the open data process while allowing managers to maintain the data sharing process with which they are most familiar and comfortable.

Our focus will be on creating coherent and cohesive procedures, however, if time permits, we will create user-friendly content for their SharePoint website that provides instructions related to the *procedures* described above. For example, the information may include descriptions of the data coordinator and data steward roles and responsibilities, definitions of fields in the data inventory to allow side-by-side reference while filling out the inventory, and instructions of the workflow of the open data process, i.e., how to fill out the data inventory and keep it updated, where to store the data inventory, and a description of the lifecycle or routine of publishing open data. The *user documentation* may also include an infographic of the high-level process with information on where to get help for managers to display in their offices. The infographic will serve as both a resource and a reminder to work on data inventories and data publication. This poster will be a vector image to allow people to print it using their regular office printers or to enlarge it and have it professionally printed. The *user documentation* will provide clear instructions related to the Data Governance Health Status checks *procedures* and will keep the project visible to managers.

## Additional Information

To ensure that our deliverables will cover the requirements set out by the Open Data Ordinance and expectations for health status checks, we will continue to have regular meetings with the Data Services Team. One key question we will need Data Services to address is whether I&P will have permission to track RTK datasets, as this will affect the content of our health status checks, as well as our documentation.

We will likely reach out to several of our previous interviewees for their feedback on our drafts of the procedures and user documentation to help guarantee usability and accessibility. In addition, as our group fine-tunes the steps involved for the user documentation, we might correspond with stakeholders involved with the process of making city data open. For example, a key partner is the Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center, which helps facilitate accessibility of open data for the city of Pittsburgh. Their perspective will be necessary to help illustrate the data publishing process for users.