



## City of North Port

City Commission Policy – Open Data

Policy No. 2026-01

Adopted by Resolution No. 2026-R-44

Adoption Date: June 9, 2026

### I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The City Commission for the City of North Port, Florida desires to establish and maintain an open data program that supports the distribution of public data in a manner that promotes open, transparent, and effective government. The Commission intends to make appropriate data more readily accessible and usable by the community at large to help facilitate an understanding of City services, track progress, and support active participation in the civic process.
- B. This policy includes guidelines for the distribution of City data and the implementation and maintenance of the City's open data program, including the requirements necessary to promote transparency, facilitate public access to City data, improve internal information sharing, and ensure compliance with applicable public records and confidentiality laws.
- C. The City Commission further supports the development and maintenance of an open data platform to encourage the sharing of information among City departments in order to improve the City's ability to deliver quality services to the community at large.
- D. The City Commission intends for this policy to complement, and not supersede, Florida's public records laws or any applicable federal, state, or local confidentiality statutes, regulations, and policies.

### II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Data. Statistical, factual, quantitative, or qualitative information that is maintained or created by or on behalf of a City department or division. This definition is inclusive of software source code developed or maintained by or on behalf of the City.
- B. Dataset. A named collection of related records, with the collection containing data organized or formatted in a specific or prescribed way, often in tabular form.
- C. Department. Refers to all City departments, divisions, boards, commissions, agencies and internal and external organizations responsible for providing and disseminating City data.
- D. Machine-readable. The industry standard, widely accepted, non-proprietary, platform-independent, method of formatting data (such as JSON, XML, and APIs), that allows for automated processing of data and facilitates search capabilities.

- E. Metadata. Structured information that describes a dataset and makes it easier to find, understand, and use, such as title, description, owner, creation date, update frequency and format.
- F. Open data. Data that is available online, in an open format, with no legal encumbrances on use or reuse and that is available for all to access and download in full without fees or a requirement of registration.
- G. Open data program. The program dedicated to making City of North Port data available to the public and engaging civic technologists, the research community, and other partners to make use of the open data in support of the program's goals.
- H. Open format. Any widely accepted, nonproprietary, platform-independent, machine-readable data format, that permits automated processing of the data and facilitates analysis and search capabilities.
- I. Public data. Information intended for public access and disclosure that contains no sensitive or protected content, and that may be freely shared, published, and posted without risk of harm to individuals or the City.
- J. Sensitive information. Any data that, if lost, compromised, or disclosed without authorization, could result in substantial harm to the City.

### III. POLICY

- A. Open Data Program. The City commits to develop and implement practices that will allow it to:
  1. Ensure data is presented in a clear, user-friendly manner, that provides opportunities for community feedback to inform future data releases and improvements;
  2. Proactively release all publishable City data;
  3. Make data freely available in open formats, with no restrictions on use or reuse, and fully accessible to the broadest range of users possible;
  4. Publish high-quality, updated data with documentation (metadata) and permanence to encourage maximum use;
  5. Provide or support access to free historical archives of all released City data;
  6. Measure the effectiveness of the datasets made available through the Open Data Program by connecting the open data efforts to the City's strategic priorities;
  7. Appropriately safeguard protected and sensitive information; and
  8. Support innovative uses of the City's publishable data by agencies, the public, and other partners.

B. Implementation. The City Manager shall implement this policy and may establish or designate a Data Governance Steering Committee (“Committee”) to coordinate Citywide administration of the Open Data Program.

1. Each City department shall designate an appropriate contact to act as its lead open data coordinator responsible for managing the department’s participation in the Open Data Program and providing that information to the Committee.
2. The Committee shall oversee the creation of a comprehensive inventory of datasets held by each department for publication to a central open data location that is maintained by the Committee and regularly updated.
3. The Committee shall develop and advise the City Manager of a process for prioritizing the release of datasets that considers new and existing signals of interest from the public (such as the frequency of public records requests), the City’s strategic priorities, existing opportunities for data use in the public interest, financial feasibility, staff time, and technical effort required to prepare and publish the dataset.
4. The City shall engage with the community to identify data needs, priorities, and gaps to incorporate those insights into dataset development and publication.
5. The City shall publish datasets to a central open data location, and ensure that published datasets are of high quality, up to date, in use-appropriate formats, and exclude protected and sensitive information.
6. The City shall ensure that appropriate metadata is included for each dataset to facilitate its use.
7. The City shall develop and oversee a routinely updated and public timeline for new dataset publication.
8. The City shall address legacy and historical datasets that no longer satisfy current standards by clearly labeling any limitations and, where feasible, remediating or supplementing datasets to improve quality and usability.
9. The City shall identify organizational training needs related to data governance and open data publication, and facilitate appropriate training and guidance for staff to promote consistent and high-quality practices.
10. The City shall increase and improve use of the City’s open data by actively encouraging department and public participation by providing regular opportunities for feedback and collaboration.

C. Central Online Location for Publishable Data.

1. The City shall create and maintain a publicly available location on the City’s website or in another suitable online location where published data is available for the public to download.

2. Published datasets shall be placed into the public domain. Dedicating datasets to the public domain means that there are no restrictions or requirements placed on the use of or access to these datasets.
3. Each published dataset should be associated with contact information for the appropriate department contact of the dataset as well as with a file layout or data dictionary that provides information about field labels and values.

D. Open Data Report and Review.

1. The Committee shall annually provide the Commission and make publicly available online or on the City's website, an Open Data Report. The report shall include an assessment of the progress made toward achievement of the Committee's established goals for the Open Data Program, an assessment of how the Open Data Program has furthered or will further the City's strategic priorities, and a description and publication timeline of datasets expected to be published by the City in the following year.
2. The Committee shall review the open data management processes annually and make revisions and suggestions for its improvement to ensure the City continues to move towards achieving the goals of this policy.

- E. Review. This policy will be reviewed periodically and may be updated based on changes in law, technology, and organizational needs; implementation standards and procedures may be updated more frequently by the Committee as directed by the City Manager.