



# Wilder Research & St. Paul Audit Committee Project #3: Data Practices Process

## Progress Update

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# Our Discussion Today

Progress update

Reminder of our purpose in this 3rd project together:

- To assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and compliance of the City of Saint Paul's data practices request processes, tools, policies, and user experience, with a focus on the City's use of GovQA and its alignment with Minnesota Data Practices Act requirements.

# Key Questions (1/3)

## A1: GovQA Capabilities & Internal Use

- What standard capabilities does the GovQA data request management system provide?
- How has the City of Saint Paul configured or customized GovQA for its purposes?
- How is GovQA's use documented for City staff (e.g., procedures, training materials, process maps)?
- Does GovQA provide sufficient management controls to efficiently and effectively process data practices requests?

## A2: Reporting & Data Trends

- What reports are available to City staff through GovQA?
- Which reports are vendor-provided, and which were created specifically for the City?
- What do aggregate GovQA reports reveal about request volumes, trends, timeliness, and patterns since GovQA's implementation?

# Key Questions (2/3)

## A3: Resident-Facing Portal & User Experience

- What online portal does City residents use to submit data practices requests?
- How does the portal function, and how do residents receive correspondence and data from the City?
- What is the experience of residents/end users when navigating the online portal?
- How do frequent “low-need, high-use” requesters perceive the City’s system compared to other jurisdictions they routinely interact with?

## A4: Policies, Training & Compliance

- What training programs and guidance are provided to City staff responsible for processing data practices requests?
- Are these training programs and guidance adequate to ensure compliance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act?
- How do City training programs and guidance compare with model forms, procedures, and guidance issued by the Minnesota Department of Administration’s Data Practices Office (DPO)?

# Key Questions (3/3)

## A5. Comparison with Other Jurisdictions

- What are the data request processes, policies, and procedures used in other Minnesota jurisdictions (e.g., Hennepin County, Ramsey County, Minneapolis, Bloomington, Duluth)?
- What request management tools and online portals do they use?
- What publicly available data (e.g., logs, statistics, performance measures) exist regarding their request handling?
- What peer-reviewed or gray-literature best practices exist for municipal public records programs nationwide?

# Data Collection 1. Document & System Review

Task	Progress
Review of the City's website, online portal, and publicly available information	Review complete, summary in progress
Examination of GovQA training materials, process documentation, and procedural guidance	Examination complete, summary in progress
Review of aggregated GovQA performance data from system inception to present	Review complete, summary in progress
Review of the MCFOA record retention schedule followed by the City	Review in progress
Review of model policies/templates from the DPO	Review in progress

# Data Collection 2. Literature & Benchmarking

Task	Progress
Review of peer-reviewed literature and gray literature	Literature review complete, synthesis in progress
Collection and review of publicly available data request documentation from other municipalities	Review of publicly available information complete, summary in progress
Examination of precedent audits (e.g., <a href="#">Milwaukee 2018 public records request audit</a> ; <a href="#">Nashville 2022 public records request audit</a> )	Review in progress

# Data Collection 3. Stakeholder Engagement

Task	Progress
Brief survey with external requesters regarding user experience	Survey developed, launching this week
Survey with City staff responsible for data request processing	Survey developed, launching this week
Interviews with staff from other Minnesota jurisdictions to understand comparative practices	Repeated attempts at contact, contact with Hennepin County finally made, pursuing additional avenues via League of MN Cities
Consultation with the League of Minnesota Cities and the Minnesota Department of Administration (DPO)	In progress

# Updated Timeline

**November:** Finalize scope in partnership with City staff

**December - February:** Document & data review & analysis, survey developed, literature search

**March - April:** Interviews scheduled & completed, survey implemented, literature synthesized

**May:** Draft report available

**May - June:** Presentation to Audit Committee, finalization of report

# Here for good.



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