



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

## Progress Update

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# Our Discussion Today

Brief 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.

# Data Collection 1. Document & System Review

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

# Data Collection 2. Literature & Benchmarking

Task	Progress
Review of peer-reviewed literature and gray literature	Synthesis complete
Collection and review of publicly available data request documentation from other municipalities	Report synthesis 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> )	Report synthesis in progress

# Data Collection 3. Stakeholder Engagement

Task	Progress
Brief survey with external requesters regarding user experience	Survey complete, analysis underway
Survey with City staff responsible for data request processing	Survey complete, analysis underway
Interviews with staff from other Minnesota jurisdictions to understand comparative practices	Interviews complete, report synthesis in progress [Note: unable to connect with Ramsey County after numerous attempts]
Consultation with the League of Minnesota Cities and the Minnesota Department of Administration (DPO)	Interviews complete, report synthesis 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 in development ←

**June 5<sup>th</sup>:** Full draft report available to Audit Committee

**June 16<sup>th</sup>:** Presentation of draft report to Audit Committee

**June 19<sup>th</sup>:** Final edits from Audit Committee due to Wilder Research team

**June 30<sup>th</sup>:** Final report available to Audit Committee reflecting edits received from Audit Committee

# Here for good.



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# 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?