



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council members

FROM: Jonathan Feldman, Chief information officer

VIA: Cathy Ball, Interim city manager

DATE: April 19, 2018

SUBJECT: Summary of memorandum drafted
for 4/24/2018 Council meeting

Please find attached the draft memorandum for the 4/24/2018 council meeting, prepared on 4/11/2018 by Eric Jackson and myself.

This memo was intended to draw upon our knowledge of police data systems and open data to present the technical feasibility and likely costs, as requested by the Public Safety Committee on 3/26/2018.

The memo acknowledges that we still need to work further with APD, as we would for any data release, at which point we will work with the City Manager's office to move forward on this project.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members Date: April 24, 2018

FROM: Jonathan Feldman, Chief Information Officer Prepared by: Eric Jackson,
Digital Services Architect

VIA: Cathy Ball, Interim City Manager

SUBJECT: Staff estimate of costs related to open data release of policing data

Background: After Code for Asheville presented its request for the release of certain key data and other information at the Public Safety Committee meeting on March 26, 2018, Vice Mayor Gwen Wisler requested that staff prepare an estimate of costs of the release, in particular, the cost of redacting out sensitive portions of the data. This memo details estimated costs for the first part of that request, namely, the release of seven datasets on the open data portal. The datasets requested are as follows: [1] use of force, [2], emergency (911) calls, [3] crime incident reports, [4] citations and arrests, [5] citizen complaints, [6] traffic stop reports, [7] demographics of Asheville Police Department officers.

General considerations: Each dataset is discussed below, but some general comments are in order.

A major advantage of releasing as open data is that the departments involved need only determine once (and utilize staff labor once) how to release the data without compromising officer safety or the personal privacy of staff or involved members of the community. This generally involves setting up automated queries of City and County systems that appropriately filter out or generalize fields that departments have identified as sensitive or not public record. (An example of generalization is replacing an exact address with a 100-block identifier.)

This process is not labor-free, but much of the work must be done whether the data is released as open data or just for a one-time public records request. Once done, this initial investment leads to ongoing staff time savings and improved customer service through consistent self-service access to the data.

For datasets involving sensitive data, the expected staff time required is roughly 8-12 hours. Other datasets typically require only 1-2 hours. It should be noted that much of

this time is already built into our current work plans as we continue to implement City Council's open data policy. Note that none of the open data requests involve real-time data. In most cases, our open data feeds are automatically updated nightly.

Individual data sets:

1. Use of force data

Staff has reviewed examples of use-of-force data published by cities participating in the Police Data Initiative and the Code for Asheville request aligns with fields typically provided. None of the fields requested involve private information, internal investigation, or external investigation data.

This information is maintained by Internal Affairs. Systems like this generally have an export function that requires, at most, a few hours of work to set up. We can work with IA and the system vendor to set this up for automated updates.

2. Emergency call data

Staff has reviewed examples of emergency call data published by cities participating in the Police Data Initiative and the Code for Asheville request aligns with fields typically provided. None of the fields requested involve private information.

This information is readily available in our Records Management System database. We already pull other information from this system for our open data portal through automated, managed filtered views that limit the type of information that can be queried. Therefore, the cost of releasing this dataset through our open data portal is the staff time required to identify privacy and safety issues and to set up the appropriate filtered views.

3. Crime incident reports

This data is already provided on the open data portal, but changed in late 2017. The Code for Asheville request relates to that change.

As part of a project to clean up and align crime incident data between the City and Buncombe County, a new managed filter was deployed. While the new feed is an improvement, one of the changes was to filter out data prior to 2013, data which had previously been included in the feed. The request is to restore the earlier data. All that is needed is a decision to remove the new date filter, which will take minutes.

Some categories of crime are excluded from this feed (e.g., sexual assaults). The Code for Asheville request that excluded categories be clearly documented is aligned with our policy to provide clear metadata on all open datasets and is already planned.

4. Citation and arrest data

Staff has reviewed examples of citation and arrest data published by cities participating in the Police Data Initiative and the Code for Asheville request aligns with fields typically provided. None of the fields requested involve private information.

This information is readily available in our Records Management System database. We already pull other information from this system for our open data portal through managed filtered views that limit the type of information that can be queried. Therefore, the cost of releasing this dataset through our open data portal is the staff time required to identify privacy and safety issues and to set up the appropriate filtered views.

5. Citizen complaints

Staff has reviewed examples of citizen complaint data published by cities participating in the Police Data Initiative and the fields specifically requested by Code for Asheville are normally provided, usually along with additional fields (e.g., demographic data). None of the fields requested involve private information. Similarly to use of force data, this data set would be obtained from the Internal Affairs database.

6. Traffic stop report data

This information is submitted regularly to the state and is publicly available there. Recently APD has begun to provide City Council with a quarterly aggregate analysis of the data, including information (such as geographic location) that is not included in the submission to the state. None of the fields requested involve private information.

This information is readily available in our Records Management System database. We already pull other information from this system for our open data portal through managed filtered views that limit the type of information that can be queried. Therefore, the cost of releasing this dataset through our open data portal is the staff time required to identify privacy and safety issues and to set up the appropriate filtered views.

7. Demographics of Asheville Police Department Officers

As noted in the Code for Asheville request, this information is related to APD's strategic goals on increasing workforce diversity.

This information is readily available in our enterprise resource planning database. We already pull other information from this system for our open data portal through managed filtered views that limit the type of information that can be queried. Therefore, the cost of releasing this dataset through our open data portal is the staff time required to identify privacy and safety issues and to set up the appropriate filtered views.