

OFFICIAL CITY POLICY

CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY

General Information	
Policy Title: Data Practices Policy for Members of the Public	Department: Legal
Policy Owner (job title): City Clerk	Policy ID: LEG 300
Council Approval Date: 07-15-2025	Resolution Number: 25-064
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Policy Overview

Policy Description:

This policy explains the rights of members of the public to access and request copies of government data under the [Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13](#) (the “Data Practices Act”).

Purpose & Scope:

The Data Practices Act requires the City to prepare a written data access policy regarding the rights of members of the public. This policy outlines the public’s right to request and inspect public data held by the City, including but not limited to:

- General Obligations
- How to Make a Data Request
- How the City Responds to a Data Request
- Requests for Summary Data
- Fees
- Department Data Designees

Definitions: For purposes of this policy, the terms below shall have the following meanings:

- **Data on Individuals** – all government data in which any individual is or can be identified as the subject of that data, unless the appearance of the name or other identifying data can be clearly demonstrated to be only incidental to the data and the data are not accessed by the name or other identifying data of any individual.
- **Data Practices Compliance Official** – The staff person who receives and responds to questions or concerns about data practices problems, including problems in obtaining access to data the entity keeps. The Deputy City Clerk (Records) is the designated Data Practices Compliance Official for the City of Golden Valley.
- **Department Data Designee** – A staff person that has been officially designated by the Responsible Authority as a “designee” to be in charge of individual files or systems containing government data and to receive and comply with the requests for government data.
- **Employee time** – Full labor costs of wages and benefits of the lowest-paid employee(s) that would have access to the data and be qualified to search and retrieve the data.
- **Government Data** – Means all data collected, created, received, maintained or disseminated by any government entity regardless of its physical form, storage media or conditions of use.
- **Redaction** – Separating public data from not public data. Government entities cannot charge for redaction.
- **Responsible Authority** – The individual responsible for the collection, use, and dissemination of any set of data on individuals, government data, or summary data, unless otherwise provided by state law. The City Clerk is the designated Responsible Authority for the City of Golden Valley.
- **Search and retrieval time** – The amount of time an employee spends searching for and retrieving government data, and for making, certifying, and electronically transmitting copies of the data or the data.
- **You** – A member of the public requesting government data.

Related Documents, Materials & Resources:

- [City of Golden Valley's Online Data Request Portal](#)
- [Data Practices Policy for Requests for Data About You, and Your Rights as a Data Subject](#) - If you would like private data about you, your minor child, or someone for whom you are the legal guardian
- [Minnesota Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13](#)
- [Minnesota Data Practices Office](#)

Data Practices Policy for Members of the Public

General Obligations

The Data Practices Act requires the City of Golden Valley to keep all government data in a way that makes it easy for members of the public to access public data. The Data Practices Act presumes all government data is public unless a state or federal law says the data is not public. Members of the public (hereafter referred to as "you") have the right to look at (inspect) public data and to request copies pursuant to the procedures and requirements in this policy and as otherwise limited by state and federal law.

How to Make a Data Request

You can request to look at data or obtain copies of data the City of Golden Valley keeps by making a request on the [City of Golden Valley's Online Data Request Portal](#).

You may also choose not to use the online data request portal. If you chose not to use the online portal, your emailed, mailed, or faxed request should include:

- a statement that you are making a request for public data under the [Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13](#)
- a clear description of the data you would like to inspect or have copied
- instructions for delivering the data to you, stating whether you would like to look at the data, receive copies of the data, or both

You are not required to identify yourself or explain the reason for your data request. However, the City may need some information about you to respond to your request (for example, if you request emailed copies, the City will need your email address). If you choose not to give us any identifying information, the City will provide you with contact information so you may check on the status of your request. If City staff do not understand your request and have no way to contact you, the City will not be able to process your request.

How the City Responds to a Data Request

Upon receiving your request, the City will process it as follows.

- If the City does not have the data, a staff member will notify you in writing as soon as reasonably possible.
- If the City has the data but is not allowed to give it to you, a staff member will notify you as soon as reasonably possible and state which specific law says prohibits its disclosure.
- If the City has the data and the data is public, a staff member will respond to your request within a reasonable amount of time by doing one of the following:
 - Arrange a date, time, and place for you to inspect data, for free, if your request is to look at the data
 - Provide you with copies of the data as soon as reasonably possible. You may choose to pick up your copies or a staff member will mail, email, or fax them to you. If you want the City to send you the copies, you will need to provide an address, email address, or fax number. The City will provide electronic copies (such CD-ROM) upon request if the data is normally kept in an electronic format.

If you request paper copies or electronic copies that require more than 30 minutes of staff time to search and retrieve, you will be charged a fee and payment will be required prior to receiving your data. Additional information about costs is below.

If you do not understand the data (technical terminology, abbreviations, or acronyms), please tell the staff person who provided the data to you.

If you do not inspect or collect copies of the data you requested within five business days of being notified they are available, further responses will be suspended. Work will resume only after you inspect or collect the data.

Staff may need additional information in order to fulfill your request. If you are contacted about your request and you do not respond within 10 days, your request may be considered 'abandoned' and closed.

The Data Practices Act does not require the City to create or collect new data in response to a data request, or to provide data in a specific form or arrangement if the data is not kept in that form or arrangement. For example, if the data you request are on paper only, City staff are not required to create electronic documents to respond to your request. If the City agrees to create data in response to your request, staff will work with you on the details of your request, including cost and response time.

Under the Data Practices Act, the City is not required to respond to inquiries or questions that are not specific requests for government data.

Requests for Summary Data

Summary data are statistical records or reports that are prepared by removing all identifiers from private or confidential data on individuals. The preparation of summary data is not a means to gain access to private or confidential data. The City may prepare summary data in certain circumstances depending on the nature of the data and staff availability and work loads. All requests for summary data must be made in writing and you will be charged for the actual cost of creating summary data in addition to any applicable copy costs.

Fees

The City of Golden Valley charges members of the public for copies of government data. These charges are authorized under [Minnesota Statutes, section 13.03, subdivision 3\(c\)](#).

All charges must be paid in full before the data is released. The charges below may vary when a charge is set by statute or rule.

- **100 or fewer paper copies**

If you request 100 or fewer pages of black and white, letter, or legal size paper copies, the charge is 25¢ for a one-sided copy or 50¢ for a two-sided copy.

- **Most other types of copies**

The charge for most other types of copies is the actual cost of searching for and retrieving the data and making the copies or electronically sending the data (e.g., sending the data by email).

Actual Cost of Making Copies

The actual cost of making copies includes employee time, the cost of the materials onto which the data is copied (paper, CD, DVD, etc), and mailing costs (if any). Estimates of employee time are calculated using the lowest-paid employee(s) that would have access to the data and be qualified to search and retrieve the data. However, if, based on your request, it is necessary for a higher-paid employee to search for and retrieve the data, the City will calculate search and retrieval charges at the higher salary/wage.

If it is determined that the data responsive to your request will exceed 100 pages, we will provide you with an estimate of the total cost prior to fulfilling your request. The actual fees charged may differ from the estimate. The City strives to

provide estimates that are as accurate as possible but cannot guarantee the final cost of the request until search and retrieval of the data is complete. You will only be charged the actual cost of fulfilling your request.

In an effort to ensure access to public data, there will be no search and retrieval charge for requests that require less than 30 minutes of staff time. Serial requests will be consolidated and considered as one request when calculating fees.

If your request is for copies of data City staff cannot copy in-house, such as photographs, the City will charge you the actual cost the City must pay an outside vendor for the copies.

Department Data Designees

The Responsible Authority, in consultation with the department heads, will appoint one or more data designees for each City department. The department designees will be responsible for:

- Maintaining departmental files and systems containing government data;
- Ensuring compliance with the Data Practices Act;
- Processing data requests; and
- Answering inquiries from the public concerning departmental data.

A list of the City's department data designees will be kept on file with the Responsible Authority and posted on the City website.