

WHAT IS DATA?

Data is a collection of raw facts about a thing, person, or activity. Examples include name, age, date, etc.

Data becomes useful information when it is organized, processed, and given context or meaning.

Data is NOT perfect. Not all data is in a digital format, accessible, accurate, or free of bias.

WHAT IS OPEN DATA? WHAT IS IT NOT?

Data becomes open when a public entity (like a nonprofit organization or government agency) takes technical steps and follows legal guidelines to make data accessible and easy to find. This means the data is formatted into common file types and is free to use and share.

It is not your sensitive personal information like social security number or private health information.

WHAT IS CIVIC DATA?

Civic data is information that comes from a town, city, or other municipality (ex. the City of Saint Paul) or information that can be applied to community purposes or the common good.

CIVIC DATA IS ABOUT US AND FOR US!

WORKS CONSULTED

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INFORMATION.STPAUL.GOV

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EXPLORE YOUR
CITY'S DATA!

OPEN SAINT PAUL



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WHAT DOES CIVIC DATA MEAN FOR ME?

- You have a right to know and understand data and information
- You can do your own research and reach informed conclusions
- You can hold the City accountable for continuing to provide accurate and transparent information
- You can request data about yourself
- You can request summary data, sometimes for a fee (cost of finding, copying, etc.) or visit open data websites for free

DO I CREATE DATA?

- Yes! Every person creates data through their daily activities
- Businesses & organizations create data through their activities
- The activities of the City and all government entities create data

WHERE CAN I GET OPEN DATA?

Open data websites provide raw datasets and sometimes visualizations for download. They are available for users to do their own analysis.

The City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County have Open Data sites where data related to City activities are free and easy to access.

Government open data portals:

- City of Saint Paul: <https://information.stpaul.gov/>
- Ramsey County: <https://opendata.ramseycounty.us/>
- State of Minnesota: <http://www.state.mn.us/opendata/>
- U.S. Government: <https://www.data.gov/>

Research from community organizations using open data:

- Wilder: <https://www.wilder.org>
- Minnesota Compass: <https://www.mncompass.org/>

IS MY DATA PRIVATE?

To protect your personal information, the City of Saint Paul differentiates between Public and Private data. Private data is protected by state and federal laws, it is not available publicly. Only data classified as Public will be made available as open data.

PUBLIC	PRIVATE
Property ownership/ Business permits	Social security numbers
Employee compensation	Health IDs and records
Wi-Fi locations	Library card history

AM I SAFE? CAN SOMEONE DISCOVER MY INFORMATION?

The City of Saint Paul takes steps to protect your information. For example:

- Data is aggregated to ensure data does not identify individuals. This is called summary data and this data used for public reporting.
- Private and confidential information is stored in files or databases which limits access to authorized individuals
- We have robust security programs that monitor and help prevent cyber attacks that could leak your data.

WHAT KIND OF DATA DOES THE CITY COLLECT?

Information on government services and operation, for example:



CITY FINANCIAL DATA
including department budgets



PARKS & RECREATION
events and activities



CITY ACTIVITIES
like snow plowing and construction permits



PUBLIC SAFETY
like fire, police, and emergency management

HOW CAN CIVIC DATA BENEFIT ME AND MY COMMUNITY?

Civic data helps make government activities transparent. It can increase responsiveness to community needs and lead to effective use of resources.

Information may be used by individuals, organizations, or community groups to look for areas of opportunity and gaps. This can mean new businesses and services or an empowered and informed community.

I DON'T GET IT. WHO CAN HELP ME?

Talk to City staff and librarians to find out more!

- Submit questions at stpaul.gov/opendataquestions (or scan the QR code above)
- Technology Help Desk: 651-266-6767
- Saint Paul Public Library: 651-266-7000

