Canada

The Open Government Guidebook 2023

A guide to releasing open government data and information on open.canada.ca

Table of contents

1. Background

1.1.   Purpose

The Open Government Guidebook was originally developed in 2018, through collaboration with working group members from over 25 Government of Canada (GC) departments. Through consultations with many of these departments from 2020 to 2021, this guide was updated to reflect the most recent international practices in open government. It aims to provide direction, best practices and tools to learn more about open government processes for the GC. It also outlines implementation guidance for relevant policy instruments including the *Policy on Service and Digital*, the *Guideline on Service and Digital* and the *Directive on Open Government* – all of which help ensure consistent approaches to open data and information practices across government.

This guidebook reflects the 2023-2026 Data Strategy for the Federal Public Service and Digital Standards, which form the foundation of the government's shift to becoming more agile and open, with user-focused approaches. Like Canada's Digital Ambition, they recognize data and information as "assets" that can be leveraged to create better community outcomes, particularly when made available for public reuse.

This guidebook is based on the international Open Data Charter, which established the following six principles to consider and apply when publishing open data and information:

1. **Open By Default**	2. **Timely and Comprehensive**	3. **Accessible and Usable**
4. **Comparable and Interoperable**	5. **For Improved Governance & Citizen Engagement**	6. **For Inclusive Development and Innovation**
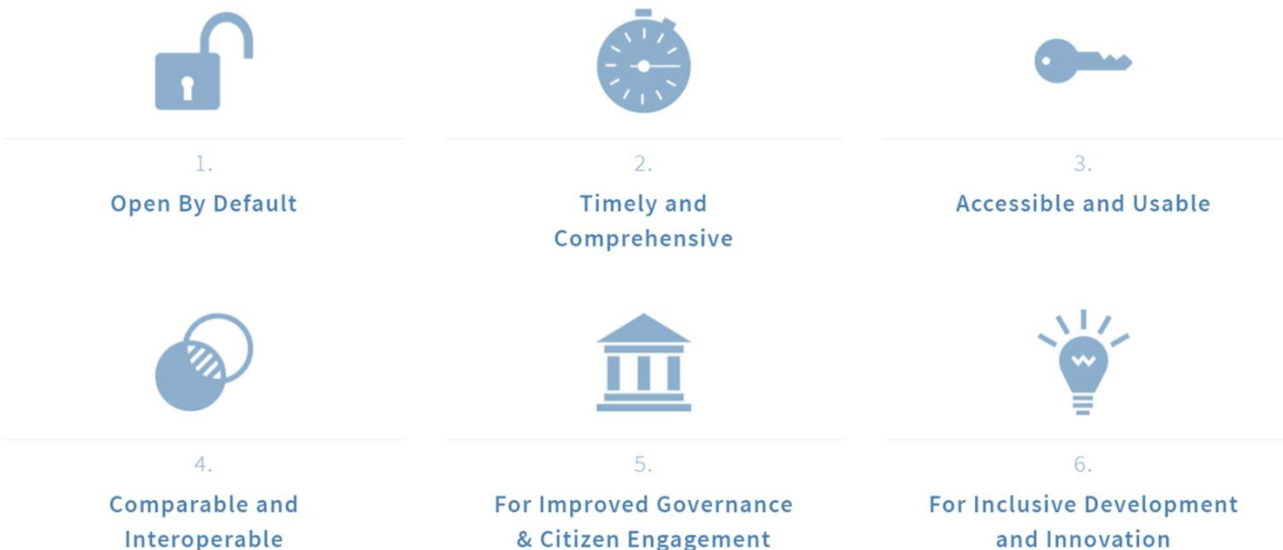
Figure 1: Open data charter principles

The intended audiences for this guidebook are those in roles that support open government within their organization, including but not limited to:

- chief information/data/security officer and staff
- IM/IT managers
- open government coordinators
- geospatial specialists
- privacy/security specialists

- data custodians, stewards and managers
- researchers and scientists
- business owners
- others with a role in data and information management and dissemination

The Open Government Guidebook will be evergreen, and it will continue to be updated to reflect the current open government practices for the GC. Feedback and suggestions for updates can be sent to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

1.2. Context

1.2.1. Canada's open government history

2011
- Open data began in the GC
- Data.gc.ca – the GC's first open data portal – launched as a pilot
- Expressed intention to join the OGP

2012
- Officially joined OGP by launching the 1st OGP National Action Plan (2012-2014)

2013
- Open Government Licence issued
- Re-launched data.gc.ca as open.canada.ca, a world class OG portal
- Named Chair of the OGP Open Data Working Group & ranked 8th in Open Data Barometer

2014
- Directive on Open Government issued
- Launched the 2nd OGP National Action Plan (2014-2016)

2015
- Ranked 7th in Open Data Barometer (tied with Norway)
- Hosted the International Open Data Conference, attended by experts & professionals from across the world
- Led negotiations with government & CSOs, to develop international Open Data Charter

2016
- Budget 2016 included funding for Open Government
- Ranked 4th in Open Data Barometer
- Launched 3rd OGP National Action Plan (2016-2018)

2017
- Elected to a 3-year term on the OGP Steering Committee
- Ranked 2nd in Open Data Barometer
- Accepted role as the OGP co-chair
- Open.canada.ca transitioned to the cloud & its maintenance transitioned from StatCan to TBS
- Open Maps was launched
- Formally adopted the Open Data Charter
- The Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF) established
- Federated search pilot with Alberta launched
- Ranked 1st in Open Data Barometer (tied with the UK)
- Launched 4th OGP National Action Plan (2018-2020)

2019
- Hosted the OGP Global Summit in Ottawa

2020
- Re-elected to a 3-yr term on the OGP Steering Committee
- Federated search continues with additional provinces (BC, YK, QC & ON)
- GC Policy on Service & Digital enacted, requiring to "maximize the release of departmental information & data..."
- 4th NAP implementation extended due to COVID-19
- Budget 2021 included funding to improve the ATIP Online Request Service & the OG Portal
- Open.canada.ca optimized to in include a data validation checker and proactive publication was expanded
- OG worked with departments to centralize COVID-19 related data, including the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) & the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)
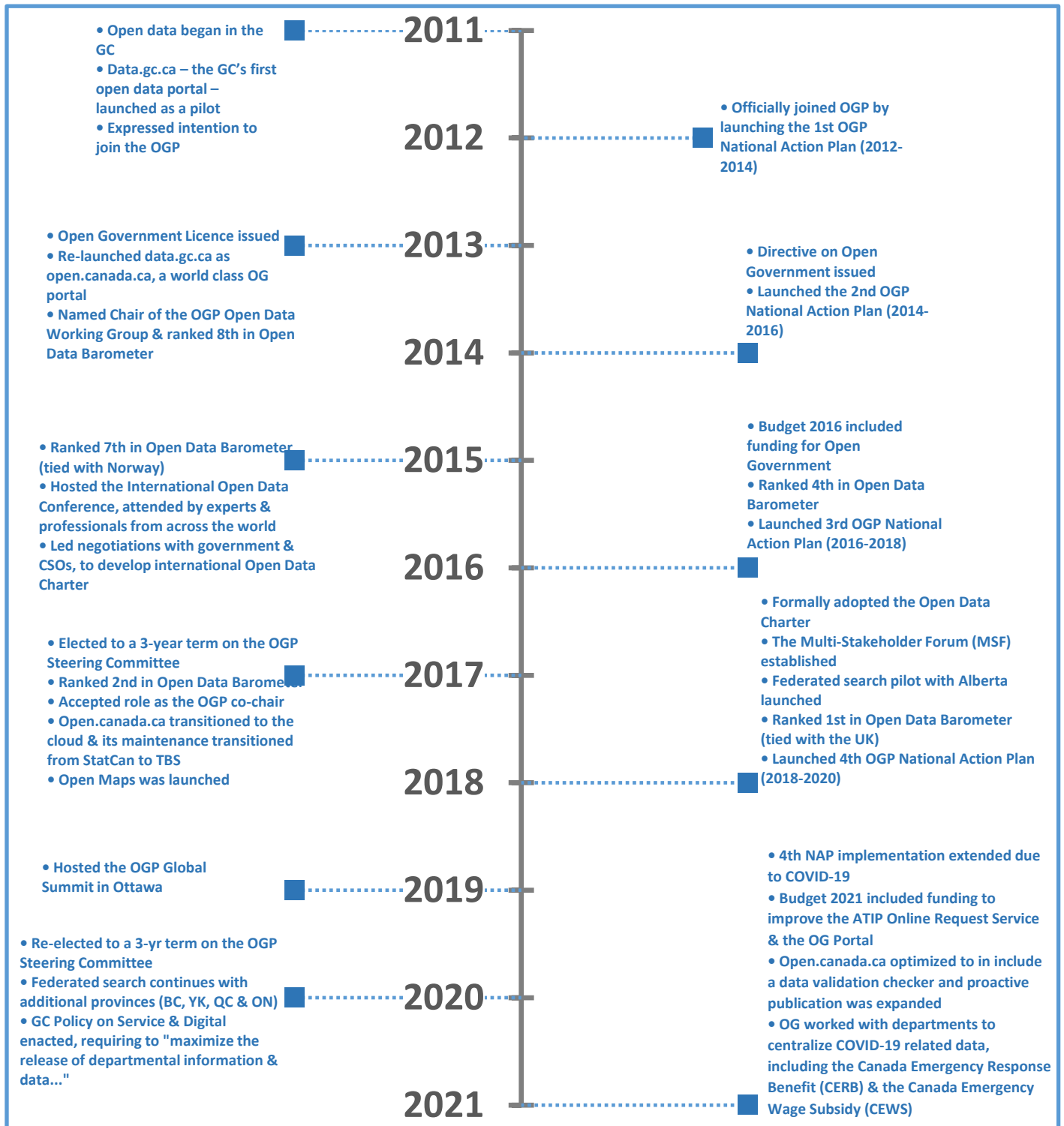
2021

Figure 2: Canada's open government history 2011–2021

1.2.2. The *Policy on Service and Digital* and the *Directive on Open Government*

The *Policy on Service and Digital* requires that GC departments:

- 4.3.2.8 Maximize the release of departmental information and data as an open resource, discoverable through the Government of Canada open government portal designated by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, while respecting information security, privacy, and legal considerations;
- 4.3.2.9 Prioritize departmental information and data to be added to the Government of Canada's open government portal, informed by public demand.

Further guidance on these requirements can be found in the *Guideline on Service and Digital,* which provides specific details on open government policy requirements. The *Directive on Open Government* is a policy tool under the *Policy on Service and Digital* that promotes the release of government information and data of high value to support transparency, accountability, public engagement and socio-economic benefits through reuse, while ensuring that security and privacy legal and policy requirements are met.

Information and data are of high value if they can be integrated or analyzed across programs, sectors, and geographic locations to help highlight trends; identify social and economic conditions and inequities; and help address global challenges such as poverty, hunger, climate change, and inequality.

Engage your IM and data management teams early: Information and data of high value should be managed in designated corporate repositories (such as Microsoft 365) to facilitate accessing relevant data and information for publishing to the portal. If available, leverage automated tools in support of good IM and data practices, particularly during clean-up activities. For further guidance, visit the IM Toolkit.

In releasing effective and timely information and data of high value to the public, GC departments can help individuals, businesses, and departments develop new insights and innovative ideas that can generate social and economic benefits, empower marginalized communities, and improve the lives of people.

The expected results of the *Directive on Open Government* are that Canadians can find and use GC information and data to:

- support accountability
- facilitate value-added analysis
- drive socio-economic benefits through reuse, while respecting security and privacy legal and policy considerations

- support meaningful engagement with their government

The *Directive on Open Government* is currently undergoing an update and is expected to be approved during 2023.

1.2.3. The Open Government Portal

Since 2011, the Open Government Portal has evolved to provide one-stop access to the GC's searchable open data, open information and open maps assets. The platform is built using open source tools and a cloud-based architecture, which enables scalability and adaptability to the growing requirements of open.canada.ca.

The Open Government Portal provides a central and authoritative source for data and information, published by departments through the Open Government Registry. To publish on the Open Government Portal, members of departments must create an Open Government Registry profile.

> Seek help: Contact open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca for advice and technical assistance when publishing your open assets on the Open Government Portal.

Open data is powering innovations across the country. Used as a resource, data can be transformed from numbers and values to insight, making it easier for people to discover, learn and make informed decisions. Explore our Open Data User Stories to get a sense of how Canadians – from students to business owners to government departments – are using open data, what they are doing with it and its impact on communities. These stories allow us to gain a better understanding of how open data and information can help to make a difference in the lives of Canadians.

i.   Open information

The *Directive on Open Government* defines open information as any digital material that is often created in free-form text using common desktop applications such as email, word processing, or presentation applications and is freely shared without restrictions. The Open Government Portal grants access to all of the GC's mandatory reporting documents (e.g., reports to Parliament, proactive disclosure reports). In addition, all documents posted online or planned for publication via departmental websites or print (e.g., statistical reports, educational videos, event photos, organizational charts) should also be made open by default, by releasing them as open information on open.canada.ca. This includes summaries of completed access to information requests.

ii.   Summaries of completed access to information requests

The *Access to Information Act* gives Canadian citizens, permanent residents and any person or corporation present in Canada a right to access records of government departments that are subject to the Act. Additionally, the *Directive on Access to Information Requests* contains policy requirements and guidance for departments to publicly post summaries of completed access to information (ATI) requests. The Open Government Portal allows users to search summaries of

completed ATI requests to find information about ATI requests previously made to the GC. Users can submit an informal request for the package.

For organizations that want to submit their access to information summaries to open.canada.ca, refer to this ATI Summaries Training Guide (internal link).

> Publish information and data: Release any ATI summaries **and** any data you have published on your departmental website on the Open Government Portal to best serve Canadians (see figure 4 for more information on why this is important).

iii.   Proactive publication

The GC has implemented a series of measures to enhance the transparency and oversight of public information in the federal government. By making this information readily available, Canadians and Parliament are better able to hold the government and public sector officials to account.

One of these measures included enshrining certain proactive publication requirements in legislation under Part 2 of the *Access to Information Act*. The legislative requirements for proactive publication by ministers and government departments include:

- briefing packages prepared for new or incoming ministers and deputy heads
- briefing packages prepared for a minister or deputy head's appearance before a parliamentary committee
- contracts over $10,000
- grants and contributions over $25,000
- hospitality expenses
- position reclassifications
- reports tabled in Parliament
- titles and reference numbers of memoranda (briefing notes)
- travel expenses
- Question Period notes prepared for ministers

Proactive publication under Part 2 of the ATIA would not require the release of information that would properly be withheld in a response to an access to information request, such as personal information or Cabinet confidences. For further guidance around the proactive publication requirements under Part 2 of the ATIA, consult ATI/PP - GCpedia or contact the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) Access to Information Policy and Performance Division.

Another measure includes those proactive disclosures that are mandated by TBS policy and acts:

- Access to information summaries (see the *Directive on Access to Information Requests*)

- Acts of founded wrongdoing (see *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*)
- Annual expenditures on travel, hospitality and conference (see the *Directive on Travel, Hospitality, Conference and Event Expenditures*)
- Departmental Audit Committees (see the *Directive on Internal Audit*)
- Grants and contributions of all values (see the *Guidelines on the Reporting of Grants and Contributions Awards*)

Finally, open government provides GC departments with the opportunity to identify other information for release and maximize the release of information to the public. For proactive disclosures that are not required under the *Access to Information Act,* the exemptions and exclusions set out in the ATIA can still provide useful indicators of what type of information is not appropriate for release.

iv.   The Federal Geospatial Platform and Open Maps

The Federal Geospatial Platform (FGP) provides access to the most comprehensive collections of accurate and authoritative geospatial information from GC departments, as well as the provinces and territories. Geospatial content is made available to the public and others in a coherent manner that enables the government's most relevant information to be spatially displayed, managed and analyzed in a visual context. Using maps, users can produce value-added products and applications, drive innovation and enhance decision-making in support of government priorities.

Geospatial or location-based data are implicitly linked to a geographic position, such as a street address, town, jurisdictional boundary, or any other geographic feature. such as coastlines or rivers. This data can be used to support national priorities, such as economic growth, social well-being, flooding, emergencies and environmental protection. The full potential of open data can be realized through combining, visualizing and analyzing geospatial data, along with other GC data holdings, to propel sound decision-making. It is important to highlight that geospatial or location-based data and metadata can be considered personal information and should be treated accordingly. Departments are encouraged to consult with their access to information and privacy offices and their privacy management units when considering the release of or access to such data.

Open Maps provides access to the GC's geospatial information. Federal departments with geospatial data holdings will register metadata and publish datasets and services on the FGP. Geospatial data and maps services eligible for release under the Open Government Licence are shared automatically through the Open Government and Open Maps Portals.

Leverage the power of place: Publish geo-enabled datasets containing addresses, geographic coordinates, or other location information on the Open Maps Portal to maximize their potential.

For more information and to publish data on the FGP/Open Maps, visit https://gcgeo.gc.ca or email the FGP at nrcan.geoinfo.rncan@canada.ca.

The Suggest a Dataset service is available on the Open Government Portal and was created to increase government transparency and foster trust by providing anyone in the public sphere with the opportunity to request the data and information they want. The service can accelerate the creation of potentially life-saving products and benefits because it allows the public to directly suggest datasets that are of most value to them and should be published on the Open Government Portal. Departments that own the data are then held accountable for responding to suggestions by providing status updates on the work being conducted for their release. All this information is published on the Open Government Portal so that the public can see whether suggested datasets are indeed active and/or underway to publication.

When attempting to identify the assets they wish to release, data owners and publishers should prioritize the publishing of these publicly valued datasets. Departments should note that release is dependent on security and privacy legislative, as well as policy requirements.

The TBS Open Government and Portals team will notify departments of suggested datasets through email communications to the departmental open government coordinators. Thereafter, departments are required to update the status related to a specific suggested dataset within three business weeks.

For more information on the public dataset requests assigned to your organization on the Open Government Portal, write to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

1.2.4.   The Open Government Registry

The Open Government Registry is the Open Government Portal's backend. It is an internal metadata catalogue used by GC departments to manage and release data and information to open.canada.ca. Like the Open Government Portal, it uses open-source tools and a cloud-based architecture, which enables scalability and adaptability to the growing requirements of open.canada.ca.

Ready, set, publish: To publish open data and information on the Open Government Portal, create an Open Government Registry account.

To publish on the Open Government Portal, users must create an Open Government Registry profile. Visit the Open Government Registry FAQ for more information on our registry.
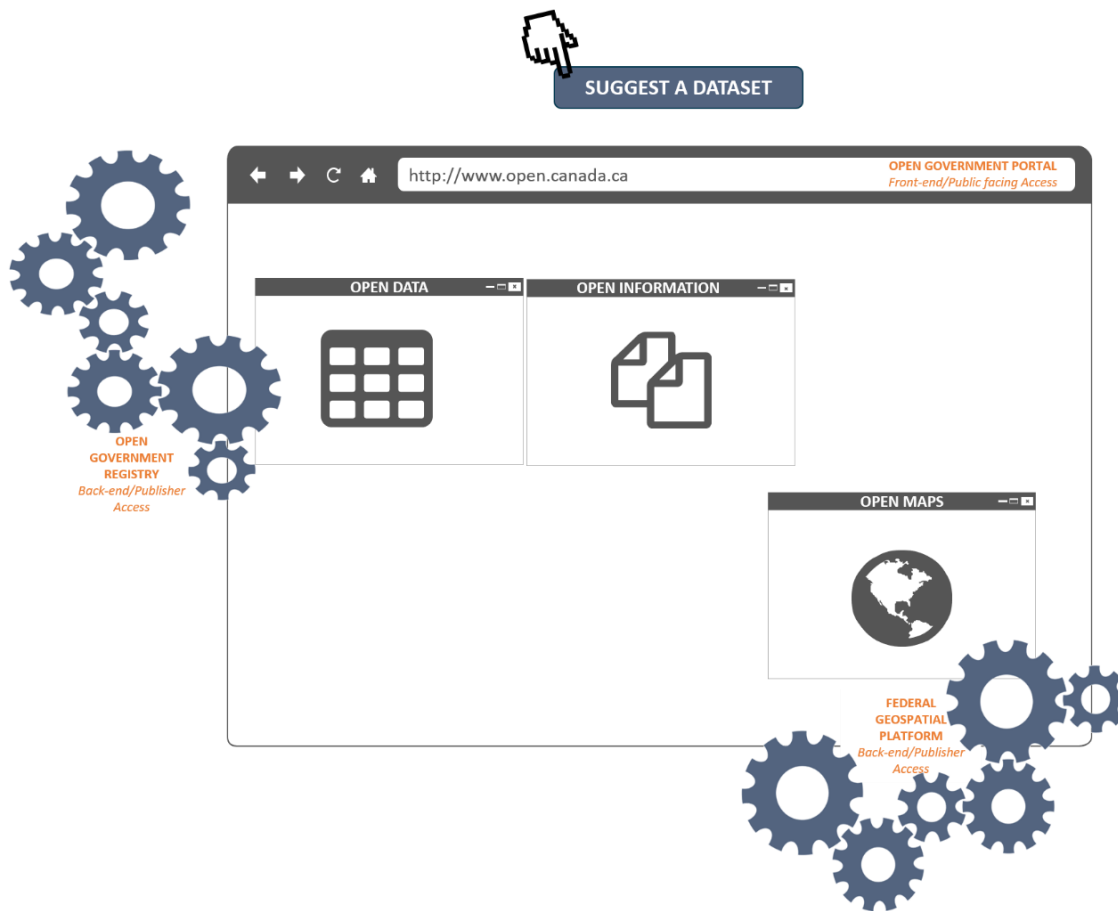

Figure 3: The open government portal

Helpful links and resources

- All of the source code for open.canada.ca is available for reuse on GitHub
- Open Government Portal - Functional Specifications - User Interface
- Open Government Registry Guide
- Open Government Portal Analytics
- GC InfoBase

1.2.5. The Open Government Licence – Canada

The Open Government Licence – Canada (OGL-Canada) is a licensing agreement that can be used by any public body in Canada in provincial, territorial, or municipal governments. It states that the Crown grants a worldwide, royalty-free, perpetual, non-exclusive access to use the information, including for commercial purposes, as long as the licence requirements are respected, including the

attribution requirements. It does not grant rights to use third party information that the provider is not authorized to license.

As such, before releasing materials on the Open Government Portal, departments should ensure the intellectual property is owned by the Government of Canada, meaning that the government has permanent permission or authority to share the resource under an open government licence, or has been granted a licensed, non-exclusive right to publicly disseminate the asset. This includes material under Crown copyright. Consult your internal Intellectual Property team for more information.

Note that although the OGL-Canada allows the user to copy, modify, publish, translate, adapt, distribute or otherwise use the data and information in any medium, mode or format for any lawful purpose, the user must identify the source of the data on their derived products.

> Understand the licence: Get familiar with Canada's Open Government Licence to ensure that you own the rights and/or have secured sufficient rights to make your material available to the public.

The OGL-Canada is designed to provide public bodies across Canada with a consistent means of licensing their information and data. This consistency reduces barriers to publication and avoids the cost of each public body developing its own licence. Perhaps most significant is that wider adoption of the licence will make it simpler to combine information from different public bodies because the licence terms will be compatible.

The goals of the Open Government Licence are to:
- provide the broadest possible use of the licensed material
- ensure that the licence is easily understood by end users and public bodies
- ensure that the licence is simple to adopt by other public bodies
- facilitate the broad use of data by ensuring that licence terms are compatible across jurisdictions

Achieving these goals is only possible when public bodies who want to use the licence adopt it as it was intended. This means the licence text is unchanged, except for specific items that are meant to be changed to suit the individual public body and their respective jurisdiction, such as to reflect differences in organization between federal and provincial or municipal governments.

The OGL-Canada grants similar rights to users as the Creative Commons Licence. The OGL-Canada has been internationally recognized as a Conformant License by the Open Knowledge Foundation with the same rights granted to users as Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY 4.0.). The main difference is that the OGL-Canada was designed specifically for GC data and information, and requires amendments to be applied to data/information not owned by the GC.

1.2.6. TBS open government departmental support

TBS open government team provides support to departments through a number of committees. The Open Government Coordinators Working Group (OGCWG), the Open Government Director General Working Group (OGDG), and the Canadian Open Government Community of Practice all meet on a monthly basis to strengthen collaboration on open government initiatives and open data policies across various levels of government and across federal departments. For more information on committee meetings, visit the GCcollab page, and to find out how to join this community, write to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

Join the community: The monthly Open Government Coordinators Working Group provides tips to help advance open government principles in your organization and is a forum to exchange best practices with your open government peers.

2. How to release and publish open data and information on the Open Government Portal

Figure 4: How to release and publish open data and information on the Open Government Portal

2.1. Understand what should be released

2.1.1. **Why →** The *Policy on Service and Digital* states that departments are required to maximize the release of open data and information by ensuring that all asset categories specified below are considered for release, via the Open Government Portal:

- **Open data and maps:** All data and geospatial assets held by GC departments are to be open by default and released as open data, while respecting information security, privacy, and legal considerations.

Design for open by default: When designing initiatives, consider how data and information governance can help you incorporate openness in your planning. For more on Governance see Appendix B.

- **Open information:** Any information that is freely shared without restriction, including all mandatory proactive disclosures (e.g., proactive publications under Part 2 of the ATIA, proactive disclosure reports) and all documents posted online or planned for publication via departmental websites or print (e.g., statistical reports, educational videos, event photos, organizational charts). These are to be open by default and released as open information under an open government licence, while respecting information security, privacy, and legal considerations.

Inventory your data: An internal data inventory exercise can help identify your organization's data to determine what can be released as open data.

WHY PUBLISH TO THE OPEN GOVERNMENT (OG) PORTAL

DISCOVERABILITY

A user-centric platform which allows for greater discoverability of open data & information assets from any search engine (Google, Bing, etc.) & supports higher data quality & metadata standards.

POLICY

As outlined in the Policy on Service and Digital, each department & agency has a delegated responsibility for Open Government & publishing on the OG Portal once data is ready for release.

IT DOES THE WORK FOR YOU

Use of Open Data Indexes makes data automatically available in tools such as Google Dataset Search (a tool which is quickly gaining popularity in the research community & which has once accounted for a traffic increase of 8% of all traffic to the OG Portal in a single month).

OPEN LICENSING

All maps, data and/or information released on the OG Portal is released under an Open Government Licence; to be copied, modified, published, translated, adapted, distributed or otherwise used in any medium, mode or format for any lawful purpose.

Figure 5: Why publish to the Open Government Portal

2.1.2. What → Here is the release scheme with six categories of open information that GC departments typically release:

About us

Departmental/agency information, location(s), contacts, constitutional and legal governance

Our finances

Financial information (projected and actual income and expenditures, tendering, procurement and contracts, travel and hospitality, position reclassifications, annual report of minister's office expenses)

Our services

A description of services offered, including publications, transactions, grants and contributions, and media releases

Our priorities

Strategy and performance information, assessments and reviews, reports tabled in Parliament

Our policies

Protocols for delivering your functions and responsibilities, policy proposals and announcements, decision-making processes, consultations

Our lists

Information held in registers required by legislation, and other lists and registers relating to your functions, summaries of completed access to information requests

2.2. Prioritize identified assets for release

Step 2

2.2.1. What → High-value information and data should be prioritized for release and can be determined by:

- most importantly: public demand (refer to the Suggest a Dataset section)
- frequent internal usage
- a large volume of external requests on a specific topic (ATI requests or other)
- a significance to historical or ongoing operations of the department/agency

2.2.2. How → the prioritization toolkit: Scoring assets against a specific set of criteria may also prove to be helpful.
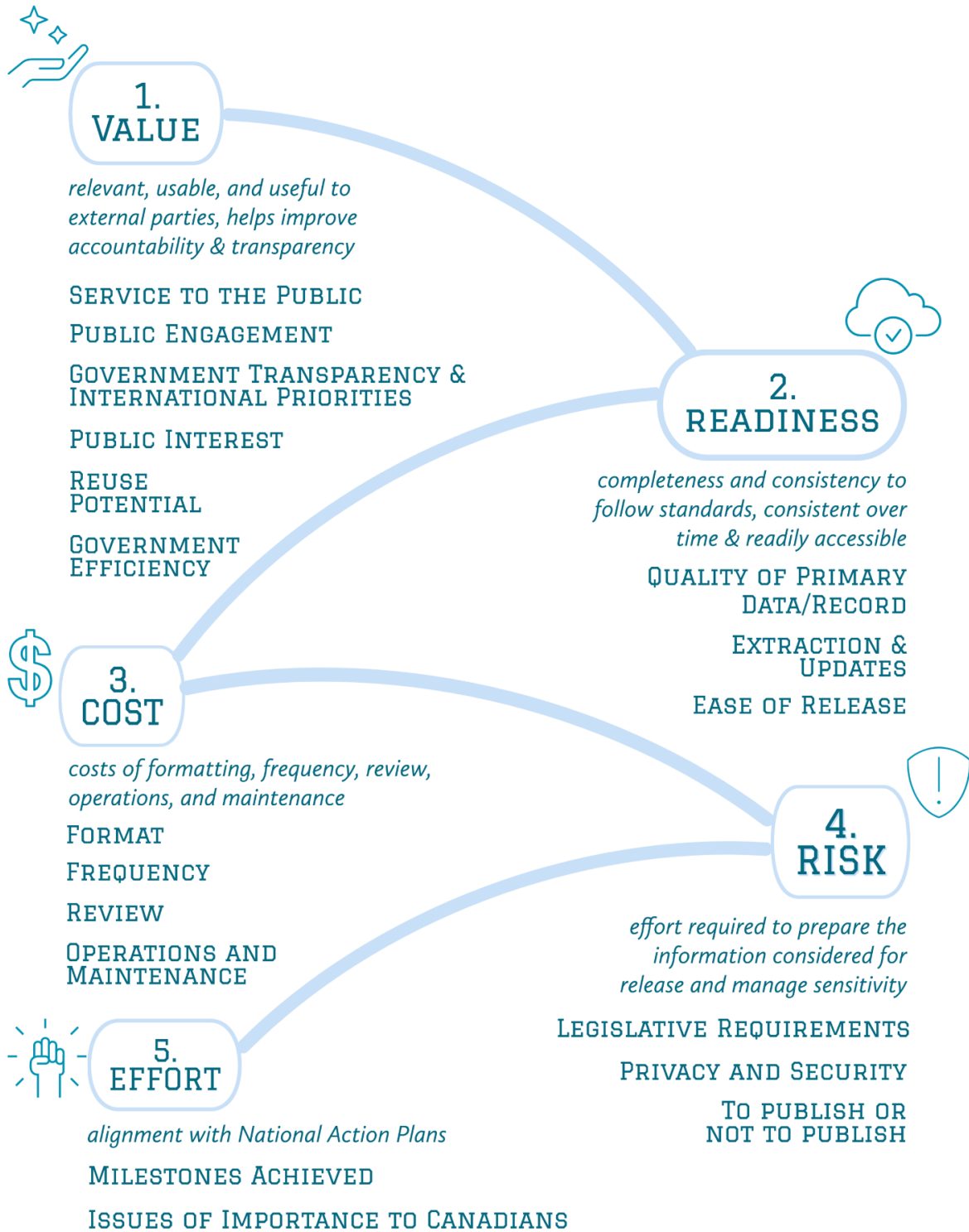
1. VALUE

relevant, usable, and useful to external parties, helps improve accountability & transparency

Service to the Public

Public Engagement

Government Transparency & International Priorities

Public Interest

Reuse Potential

Government Efficiency

2. READINESS

completeness and consistency to follow standards, consistent over time & readily accessible

Quality of Primary Data/Record

Extraction & Updates

Ease of Release

3. COST

costs of formatting, frequency, review, operations, and maintenance

Format

Frequency

Review

Operations and Maintenance

4. RISK

effort required to prepare the information considered for release and manage sensitivity

Legislative Requirements

Privacy and Security

To publish or not to publish

5. EFFORT

alignment with National Action Plans

Milestones Achieved

Issues of Importance to Canadians

Figure 6: The prioritization toolkit

i. To use the prioritization toolkit:

- Consider that specified data and information that are mandated for publication under Part 2 of the *Access to Information Act* (ATIA) or TBS policy must be the top priority for release, regardless of how they are scored using this toolkit.
- For all other data and information assets eligible for release, rate each asset against the criteria below, by adding one point for each true statement.
- Assess the overall scores for your assets in descending order to identify which assets should be most prioritized for release.

1. **Value:** The asset is relevant, usable, and useful to external parties, and/or helps to improve accountability and transparency, while respecting information security, privacy, and legal considerations.

Service to the public Assign points to information and data that provides benefits to the public. • The asset helps improve services • The asset allows for innovation and economic growth	Public engagement Assign points to information and data that will help the public meaningfully engage in ongoing and current discussions. • The asset raises key questions surrounding a topic of current public discussion • The asset advances dialogue and/or provides insight on an issue of public concern	Public interest Assign points to information and data that has been frequently requested through an ATI request. • The asset contains information that is frequently sought through the ATI process • The asset is associated with a subject matter area of high social interest • The asset adds value to a particular topic of public concern
Government transparency and international priorities Assign points to information and data that will allow the public to better understand GC priorities and commitments. • The asset is relevant to current GC priorities and commitments • The asset aligns with priorities	Reuse potential Assign points to information and data that can be easily updated. • The asset is frequently updated • The asset can help fuel innovation and economic growth • The asset has been previously requested through the Suggest a Dataset service on the open government portal • The asset is highly sought after through other means	Government efficiency Assign points to information and data that will provide value to other GC departments and provide more effective services. • The asset's release could help provide more efficient government services • The asset's release could help highlight areas in need of greater efficiency in government services

2. **Readiness:** The asset's completeness and consistency follow the required standards, is consistent over time, and is readily accessible.

Quality of the primary asset	Extraction and updates	Ease of release
Assign points for verified quality. • The asset satisfies the dimensions of the GC Data Quality Framework • The asset is updated in accordance with user-defined expectations/frequency • There is valid supporting documentation to accompany the asset (e.g. guides, schemas, or data dictionaries) • The asset's content is at the appropriate readability level (i.e. the eighth grade)	Assign points to data and information that is updated automatically. • There are mechanisms in place to facilitate automatic updates	Assign points to information and data that have been translated, anonymized, de-identified, or accessible. • The asset has been translated in both official languages conforms to the requirements of the *Official Languages Act* • If relevant, the asset is sufficiently aggregated, with no further suppression required • The asset meets GC accessibility requirements

Focus on data quality: Ensure that your asset can be easily **access**ed and is **accurate, coherent, complete, consistent**, interpretable, relevant, and timely, in accordance with the Government of Canada's Data Quality Framework.

3. **Cost:** The asset considers the costs of formatting, frequency, review, operations, and maintenance.

Format	Frequency	Review	Operations and maintenance
Assign points for information and data that is in a suitable format. • The asset is in a structured, non-proprietary format that does not require conversion • The estimated overall cost for preparation and release is low	Assign points for information and data that can be easily updated. • After initial release, processes/automation is in place to facilitate timely updates • A reasonable timeline has been established for regular updates • The estimated overall cost of maintenance is low	Assign points for information and data that does not require review. • Processes/automation is in place to facilitate ease of sharing • Required involvement with the legal department is low or not required • Regulatory (privacy, security, official languages, accessibility, etc.) concerns have been addressed	Assign points for the release of an asset that will not cause greater costs to be incurred. • There are no/low life cycle costs to sharing the asset • Additional technology resources have been identified or are not required

• The asset and associated materials have been translated and are accessible • The asset is in an open and accessible format that complies with the [Standard on Web Accessibility](#)			• System changes have been implemented or are not required

Tap into resources: Use the Quick Reference Guide for techniques and criteria on ensuring that your open dataset meets the GC's accessibility level of WCAG 2.0 AA, and the Accessibility Checker to test the accessibility of open data file formats in compliance with the Web and Open Data Validator (formerly WPSS), a tool maintained by Public Service Procurement Canada.

4. **Risk:** The asset reflects a mitigation of carefully considered risks by weighing existing requirements, privacy, and security, to determine when or whether to publish.

Existing requirements	Privacy and security	To publish or not to publish
Assign points to data and information that will not conflict with existing requirements. • The asset's release does not violate any legislative or policy requirements • The asset has been assessed against the First Nations principles of OCAP and is not owned by First Nations, Inuit, and/or Métis communities	Assign points to data and information that is not classified. Refer to the Privacy and Security section for more information. • The asset does not require protection • The asset does not contain any personal information	Though weighing risk is of the utmost importance, we must ensure that risk is measured on two fronts when it comes to publishing open data and information. • The risk of not disclosing or proactively publishing the asset outweighs the risk of protecting it

5. **Effort:** Determining how the asset's release supports the commitments captured in the GC's National Action Plans on Open Government is a good way of ensuring that milestones are achieved, to address the issues of importance to the peoples of Canada.

Identify what should not be released → Sometimes departments and agencies are unable to release data or information because it is subject to certain restrictions, such as Cabinet confidences, solicitor–client privilege, personal information, classified or protected information, advice, recommendations, third party information, or information obtained in confidence.

Note: The Release Checklist provides more guidance on the data and information that can be published. Do not release or publish assets that contain information that is not able to be released to the public due to security, privacy or licensing concerns, or which GC departments do not have the authority to release, such as the following.

ii. Privacy, personal information and confidentiality

Subsection 8(1) of the *Privacy Act* prohibits the disclosure of personal information under the control of a government department, except in accordance with the exceptions set out in subsection 8(2). A dataset or information that contains personal information about an individual must not be disclosed on the Open Government Portal.

Personal information, as defined by the *Privacy Act*, is information about an identifiable individual that is recorded in any form. This definition applies to both a single information record or a combination of available information records that may render an individual identifiable. This includes but is not limited to information about:

- race
- national or ethnic origin
- religion
- age
- marital status
- medical, criminal or employment history

Sufficiently anonymized data – that is, information that had once been personal, but has been irreversibly and permanently modified so that there is no reasonable expectation that the individual can be identified – can be released. However, departments must ensure that individuals cannot be re-identified directly or indirectly, either through that dataset alone or in combination with other available information. Departments must consult with their access to information and privacy offices and their privacy management units when considering the publication of such information.

Be mindfully open: Ensure that your release process includes privacy, security, and legal considerations to publish open data and information safely.

An asset that provides information about vulnerable populations may pose a privacy risk. For example, individuals who belong to smaller minority groups may be easily identified when

combining data points across various assets. In some cases, even a postal code combined with a single piece of sensitive data can reveal an identity, breach privacy, and potentially cause harm. Departments must remain attuned to vulnerable groups to safeguard information appropriately, particularly given the push to collect Gender-Based Analysis Plus information and greater disaggregated data.

Departments may still be able to release assets that contain these sorts of information elements by anonymizing the data so that it no longer contains personal information; that is, there is no reasonable expectation that the individual can be identified directly or indirectly by any means or person. It should be noted that section 3(j) of the *Privacy Act* allows the disclosure of personal information under specific exemptions. Departments must take necessary measures to protect against the release of personal and de-identified information.

An asset may breach confidentiality if its release impairs a government's ability to make decisions. Examples include:
- court rulings or police investigations
- budget and policy decisions that may impact financial markets
- negotiations, such as collective bargaining or international trade agreements
- Cabinet confidences
- solicitor–client privileges, advice, or recommendations
- personal, classified, or protected information
- third party information or information obtained in confidence

For additional guidance on confidentiality, personal information, access to information and privacy requirements, consult your internal ATIP Coordinator and/or Chief Privacy Office.

iii. Security

An asset that provides information about vulnerable or targeted individuals or departments may also pose security risks. Examples of these assets may include:
- information related to policing activities
- information about vulnerable groups, such as prison guards

Departments should ensure that the data or information asset does not increase security risks to the government as a whole and conforms to the requirements of the *Policy on Government Security* and its related instruments.

iv. Supporting Indigenous Data Sovereignty

Data on Indigenous Peoples and communities have historically been collected in a colonial context, and unilateral efforts by the federal government to publish those data can be viewed as a continuation of that colonial legacy. The Government of Canada recognizes this reality, and will continue to work with Indigenous Peoples to support their self-determination in the data sphere.

This work includes determining:
- how to identify data related to Indigenous lands and Peoples that are included in federal data holdings;

- how best to support Indigenous data capacity to collect, manage, use, and share their data as they see fit;
- and to actively participate in, contribute to, and benefit from stronger, more inclusive and interconnected information and statistical systems in Canada.

The GC is committed to nation-to-nation relationships with Indigenous Peoples. The various elements of open government, including open policy-making and open data, have different implications when considering data related to First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, organizations, and Peoples. As the Government of Canada continues to work with Indigenous partners to advance nation-to-nation relationships, reconciliation, and Indigenous self-determination, Indigenous data sovereignty is an important part of the conversation.

The 2023–2026 Data Strategy for the Federal Public Service includes Support for Indigenous data sovereignty as one of five desired outcomes, and advancement of a whole-of-government approach to the management and sharing of Indigenous data as an area for action. As work towards these goals continues, federal departments and agencies are encouraged to inform themselves on whether and how opening their data holdings might impact Indigenous Peoples. This may include:
- Learning about the First Nations Principles of OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) and the First Nations Data Governance Strategy published by the First Nations Information Governance Centre; as well as and the data priorities (Priority Area 4) in the National Inuit Strategy on Research published by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.
- Connecting with officials in your department responsible for Indigenous services or relationships, and/or with Indigenous Services Canada, who can provide more information on ongoing efforts to support Indigenous data sovereignty and capacity, including the Transformational Approach to Indigenous Data, and opportunities to share best practices, including the Interdepartmental Collaborative Committee on Indigenous Data that Indigenous Services Canada and Statistics Canada co-chair.
- Working with and co-developing approaches with Indigenous Peoples wherever possible.

Support Indigenous Sovereignty: get informed on whether and how opening data holdings might impact Indigenous Peoples by learning about the First Nations Principles of OCAP and the National Inuit Strategy on Research; by connecting with your internal Indigenous Services group; and by working to co-develop approaches with Indigenous people wherever possible.

v. Legal and contractual limitations

An asset may be subject to legal or contractual agreements that prevent it from being released. Agreements may include:
- limitations in data-sharing agreements and memoranda of understanding
- third party data (departments that collect data for federal use, but the organization may not have the rights to publish it on open.canada.ca)
- commercial licence (data purchased from third parties that may have limited rights for distribution)

- vendor limitations (data that is delivered under a contract that captures exclusions for extracting and manipulating data)
- non-disclosure agreements
- solicitor–client privilege

Ensure that the department has the mandate, legislative authority, or permission from a third party provider (if applicable) to publish the data or information asset under the Open Government Licence – Canada. Your legal team will be able to help you assess data and information to determine whether there are other legal issues.

2.2.3. Who → roles and responsibilities: GC departments are responsible for the assessment of their respective data and information before seeking approval for release. Here are the stakeholders in the assessment process (may differ from department to department, depending on size and organizational structure):

Enterprise data stewards and custodians	Chief data/information officer	Business owner (DG-level)	Information Technology Services	Departmental open government coordinator
Contains the subject matter expertise in a business line or data domain and is responsible for managing enterprise data across its lifecycle.	Previously known as the Information Management Senior Official (IMSO), is responsible for meeting the requirements associated with their role, as noted in the *Policy on Service and Digital*. This responsibility/task may be delegated.	Identifies data and information assets eligible for release and ensures that the criteria for release has been carefully considered and that appropriate consultations with subject matter experts (e.g. ATIP, Communications Branch) have occurred prior to the approval process. Ensures that assets have been committed to support released	Recommends, designs, develops, and tests tools to convert the department's information into machine-readable formats that comply with open data formats. Locates where the asset can be housed on the departmental server and makes unstructured data and information available in open and accessible formats. Ensures that the file format meets the *Standard on Web Accessibility*.	Helps content owners with the release process (e.g., identification, preparation, approval mechanisms and entry into the Open Government Registry). Provides recommendations to the CIO for the approval of the data release. Responds to clients requesting information on open.canada.ca.

Know your role: A clear understanding of roles and responsibilities are essential to the efficient release of your department's assets. Ensure that you know where you fit in and who should be supporting you to execute your responsibilities. For more on roles and responsibilities, see Appendix B: Governance – Section 6. Roles and responsibilities.

Legal Branch
Provides advice, as required, to business owners to ensure compliance with government acts and policies, including that the dataset or information asset can be released under the Open Government Licence – Canada.

Access to Information and Privacy Office
Provides advice and guidance regarding anonymization/re- and de-identification, as well as what constitutes personal information. Can also advise on legal and policy requirements for protecting personal information. May offer insight on existing restrictions to release, such as any Cabinet confidences, solicitor–client privilege, personal information, classified or protected information, advice, recommendations, third party information, or information obtained in confidence.

Security Services (departmental security officer)
Ensures that the data or information asset does not increase security risks to the department, to other departments, or to the government as a whole and that it conforms to the requirements of the *Policy on Government Security* and its related instruments.

Official Languages
Provides advice, as required, to business owners to ensure compliance with the *Official Languages Act* and policies. Reference: *Directive on Official Languages for Communications and Services*.

Communications
Provides advice, as required, to business owners to ensure compliance with communication acts and policies, including the *Standard on Web Accessibility*.

For more information on who to involve in the assessment process, refer to our guidance on Governance (Appendix B).

Helpful links and resources

- [Privacy, security, and confidentiality guidelines (Appendix A)](#)
- [The Digital Privacy Playbook](#)
- [Data Anonymization as Disclosure Control](#) (GCcollab Working Group)
- [De-identification Guidelines For Structured Data](#) by the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario
- [Data Release Toolkit](#) by the Office of the Chief Data Officer of San Francisco
- [Guideline on Service and Digital: Release of information and data on the open government portal (section 3.4)](#)
- [Privacy Implementation Notice 2020-03: Protecting privacy when releasing information on about a small number of individuals](#)
- [Privacy Implementation Notice 2023 01: De identification - Canada.ca](#)

2.3.   Prepare the assets for **release**

How → The following diagram outlines when the Open Government Registry should be used to add content to open.canada.ca, or when the dataset or information asset should be added to an alternative centralized system (for example the FGP, or publications.gc.ca).
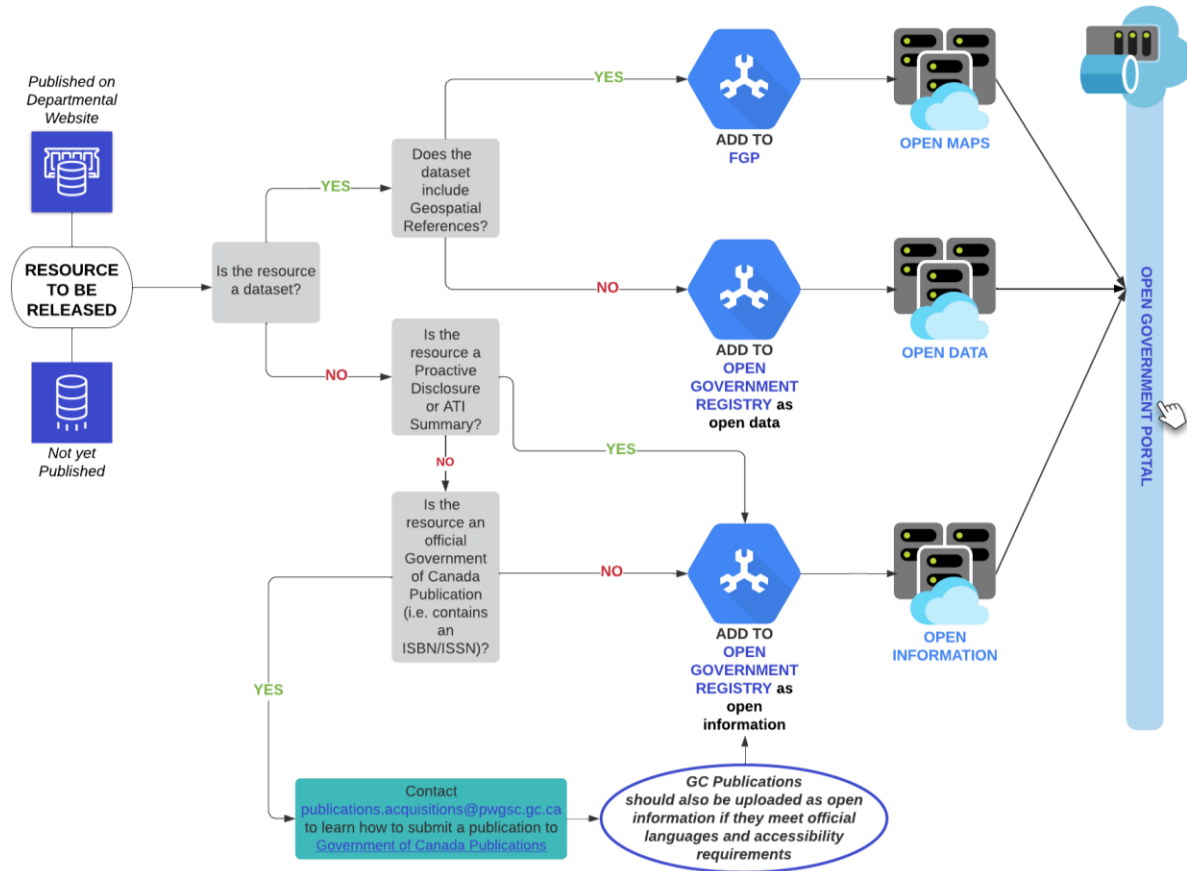
Figure 7: Diagram for publishing assets through the Open Government Registry

The Open Government Portal: Publish your open data and information on the Open Government Portal, under the Open Government Licence – Canada to enhance the discoverability of your assets from any search engine and ensure compliance with articles 4.3.2.8 and 4.3.2.9 of TBS's *Policy on Service and Digital*. Use Open Data Indexes so that data is released under an open licence and automatically available on Google Dataset Search.

2.3.1. Open data requirements

The following requirements must be met to successfully register open data via the Open Government Registry (for the full guide to the Open Government Registry, see the Open Government Registry Guide):

Metadata
A standardized, bilingual metadata record describing the dataset. The portal registration process requires metadata based on the Open Government Metadata Application Profile, while the Open Maps Portal requires compliance with the Standard on Geospatial Data. Metadata allows your data to be searchable to users.

Formats
Online access to one or more data file(s) in an open and accessible format(s). Accessible format types allow your data to be accessed by machine readers, making it useable to a wider audience. More than one open format may be provided (e.g., CSV and JSON), as long as each file instance contains the same information.

Links
A direct link to the data on the Web, preferably via a unique and persistent uniform resource identifiers (URIs). URIs should point to **https:** sites, rather than **http:** sites. For departments that have access to the canada.ca Adobe Experience Manager, using the built-in Digital Asset Manager is recommended. Refer to Appendix A.

CSV for machine-readability: Publish CSV files instead of XLS, as this format is more accessible and machine-readable. Ensure that your files align with the GC CSV Guide and are well-structured by performing a validation check with CSVLint; for JSONs and XMLs, use freeformater.com.

Data dictionary
A data dictionary or product specification file that contains definitions for data elements in the dataset (e.g., if the data files are csv files, the data dictionary would describe the column headings).

Data assets
Data assets must meet a minimum three-star rating on the Openness Rating scale. To do so it must be:
1. available on the Web under an open licence
2. available as structured data (xml vs. a pdf scan of a table)
3. available in an open, non-proprietary format (a csv file vs. an xml file).

Details on data dictionaries: Each open dataset should include a supporting documentation file, data dictionary, product specification file or web page. Supporting documentation explains your data content and structure to users who may not understand the acronyms, attributes, features, codes, government language or even errors found in your data.

2.3.2. Open information requirements

The following requirements must be met to successfully register open information via the Open Government Registry:

Metadata	**Formats**	**Accessibility and translation**	**Copy**
A standardized, bilingual metadata record describing the asset. The Portal registration process requires metadata based on the [Open Government Metadata Application Profile](#).	One or more compliant document(s) using open and accessible format(s). Files may be provided in multiple compliant formats (e.g., TXT, HTML, PDF-U/A and EPUB3), provided that each file instance contains the same information. Optionally, one or more non-compliant, proprietary document file(s) (e.g., a Word version of the ePub [EPUB3] file*).	Open information documents must comply with the [Standard on Web Accessibility](#) and the *[Policy on Official Languages](#)*.	Open information assets can be uploaded to the Open Government Registry; however, this should only be a copy, and not the authoritative or original version. **The original version should be maintained within the organization's records management system.**

* Non-compliant alternate formats may be provided as a convenience but must contain the same information as the compliant format. For example, a plain text file does not have formatting capabilities and a Word version of the information may be provided as print-ready alternative (in addition to the plain text file (TXT)).

Accessible PDFs: Check whether your open information PDF asset is accessible by running an [accessibility report](#).

Be long, not wide: In a well-structured dataset, each row should be an observation of the data and each column should be a variable that describes that observation = long data (correct). Wide data (incorrect) formatting may be popular within publications, but it will normally require a user to transpose the data before they can do analysis or create visualizations.

Boost comparability and interoperability: Adhere to the Open Data Charter (ODC) principles by ensuring that open datasets use common reference data standards where appropriate. For example, those referencing Provinces and Territories should make use of the Reference data standard on Canadian provinces and territories.

2.4. Obtain **approval**

Step 4

Release Checklist → To support departments in managing the risks related to releasing data and information assets, TBS has developed a Release Checklist that consolidates common release exceptions. Open government data publishers must ensure that an answer of "true" can be given for each criterion prior to seeking release approvals. Final approval for release onto the Open Government Portal may be delegated from the designated departmental authority once departments have established a release process. This includes departments determining delegation for new datasets within business lines and updating existing assets on the portal. For more information on delegation of authorities see Appendix B: Governance.

Always be documenting: As a tool for the open government principles of accountability and transparency, when seeking approvals include the Release Checklist, along with any documentation that shows how each criterion has been met.

Release Checklist	True	False
Confidentiality: Confidentiality requirements have been considered and the asset is free of any relevant concerns, for example, Cabinet confidences, solicitor–client privilege, personal information, classified/protected information, advice, recommendations, third party information or information obtained in confidence.	☐	☐
Authority to release: The department has the mandate, legislative authority or permission from a third party provider to release the data or information asset under the Open Government Licence – Canada.	☐	☐
Formats: The asset is in an open and **accessible** format that complies with the Standard on Web Accessibility.	☐	☐
Privacy: The asset is free of any personal information, as defined in section 3 of the *Privacy Act*.	☐	☐
Official languages: The asset is available in both official languages and conforms to the requirements of the *Official Languages Act*.	☐	☐
Security: Security requirements have been considered and the asset is free of any risk to the department, to other departments, or to the government as a whole and conforms to the requirements of the *Policy on Government Security* and its related instruments.	☐	☐
Other – legal/regulatory/policy/contractual: The release of data or other information assets complies with all other relevant legal, regulatory, contractual and policy requirements (e.g., it is confirmed that there are no relevant legal, contractual, third party or policy restrictions or limitations).	☐	☐

Governance is key: Create a monthly internal open data working group to identify your organization's open data assets, create a network that fosters collaboration and share best practices.

2.5. Release the identified assets

Step 5

To add a dataset or information on the Open Government Portal via the Open Government Registry (internal link), you will first need to request an account by completing the Request an Account form found on the Registry log in page. Your account will be activated and linked to your organization.

You will then be able to create or modify records in the Open Government Registry. Departments act as publishing agents for records. This means records are released by and belong to an organization rather than individual registry users.

Note: While departments may choose to continue publishing content to their departmental sites, they should also be publishing this data and information to open.canada.ca. This can be accomplished by linking to the departmental site, rather than duplicating the publication. See the Why section for more on the benefits of releasing data to the Open Government Portal.

The Open Government Registry Guide provides details on the required steps to release an asset on open.canada.ca. To add a geospatial dataset on the Open Government/Open Maps Portal, visit https://gcgeo.gc.ca/en or contact NRCan.fgp-pgf.RNCan@canada.ca.

HTTPS all day: If publishing open data by putting files on a departmental server, ensure that the links in your datasets are HTTPS. If they are not, users will not be able to access them; Google Chrome now blocks HTTP links since upgrading to version 89. For new publications, it is recommended that publishers upload their data files directly into the Open Government Registry to avoid issues associated with linking.

2.6. Manage released assets

Step 6

2.6.1. Organizing a metadata record

It is recommended that you bundle similar datasets/information assets together and create one metadata record in the Open Government Registry, rather than creating a record for each individual asset.

For example, datasets that are released annually or in subsets should be added to the same record. One record can be created to describe the datasets, but individual assets (or files) can be added in bulk by using the "Add a Resource" form in the Open Government Registry.

There is no limit to the number of assets that can be added to a single metadata record.

Refer to the following datasets as an example:

- Breaking datasets up by year: Fuel consumption ratings
- Breaking datasets up into related subsets: The Canadian Nutrient File: Nutrient Value of Some Common Foods

Also refer to the Open Government Metadata Application Profile and the GC Standard on Metadata for more information.

Metadata matters: Use plain language, avoid abbreviations and acronyms, begin the title with the name or subject of the asset, and ensure that the title of the dataset does not exceed 70 characters and that the dataset is fully translated and accessible.

2.6.2. Minor updates

Similar to adding multiple subsets of data together, updates can be added as an additional asset on your record. Or you can replace the current version of the asset with the updated version. If you are replacing the file, we would recommend providing information in the description on the metadata record or as an additional file to explain to users what has been updated or changed.

2.6.3. Open government APIs and digital accessibility

Open Government Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) can be accessed to automate the publication and update of assets on the Open Government Portal. APIs can be beneficial when managing datasets and/or proactive disclosures on the Portal by allowing departments to:
- apply bulk changes to multiple datasets
- automatically generate and update datasets
- upload proactive disclosures that originate from another system of record

Open Government APIs: To perform bulk dataset uploads and to automate updates, explore the integration of Open Government APIs by liaising with your internal technical representatives. For help, write to us at open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

Using an API does not require an all-or-nothing approach. Rather, users benefit from its use for some tasks, while the user interface can be used for others. This includes the publication of data from departmental sites and databases to the Open Government Portal, where the information becomes discoverable in a central location.

For more training and information on how you can benefit from the power of open government APIs, consult the Open Government GCcollab Learning Space.

2.6.4. Open Government Analytics

Open Government Analytics are available to support departmental open government coordinators in their roles to track and report on the progress of open government deliverables and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Analytics are your friend: To gauge how Canadians are using your open data, refer to your departmental Open Government Analytics.

2.7. Create a strategy to **promote** assets

Step 7

Supporting open data and information with outreach and engagement activities can significantly increase the value for both users and curators. We encourage data and information curators to work with their local communications shops to develop an outreach and engagement strategy for open government.

Connect with comms: Work with your internal communications shops to promote newly released open datasets on the Open Government Portal and reach a larger audience.

Approaches range from the very light-touch and community-focused to more formal campaigns. Here are some ideas:

- **Develop** a central open government email account to manage inquiries and comments on released dataset and information assets
- **Maintain** a distribution list of data stakeholders and send emails highlighting new/changed data holdings
- **Host** digital information or Q&A sessions on data holdings (e.g., Statistics Canada's (StatCan) Chat with an Expert series)
- **Present** at open data or open government meet-ups, committees and working groups, hackathons, conferences, university seminars or other community events
- **Blog** or provide featured maps on open.canada.ca

- **Collaborate** regularly with internal communications shops to strategize and foster this essential relationship (social media, blogs, GCTools, newsletters, cross-promotion opportunities, etc.)
- **Meet** directly with data stakeholders, virtually or in person, for feedback and discussion
- **Contact** academics or social policy NGOs with an interest in the field
- **Seek** input on community needs and priorities

Gain knowledge and sharpen skills: For open government–related training, refer to the Open Government GCcollab page, Apolitical, Stat Can's Data Literacy Catalogue and Canada School of Public Service.

2.8.   Maintain assets on an ongoing basis

Step
8

The public and organizations across Canada rely on the Open Government Portal to fuel innovation and business. As a result, any change to a given data or information asset may have larger implications to asset by-products and critical business lines. For this reason, it is important to consider the impact on the user when changes are made either to the content that your department has released or the metadata describing it.

An important part of hosting data and information on the Open Government Portal is ensuring that it remains useable and accurate. This includes managing both the content released and the metadata records associated with them in the Open Government Registry and requires consideration of how the original sources themselves are managed. We recommend periodically testing the links and files in your record to ensure that they can be consistently and seamlessly accessed by users. This is particularly important for html links, where the web pages may change over time. Additionally, activities related to creating the consultation version or copy for release online should be documented to support departmental information management and version control.

Seek guidance from your internal information management office for more information on life-cycle management and version control.

Stay current: Test your Open Government Portal records regularly and keep your data and information assets updated to ensure they remain accurate and seamlessly useable.

2.8.1. The openness rating

The Open Government Portal allots an openness rating as an indicator of how open data and information assets are. These ratings are on a scale of 1 to 5 stars and serve as useful guidelines for maintaining assets on the open government portal.

★	The resource is available on the Web (whatever format) under an open licence
★★	The resource is available as structured data (e.g., Excel instead of image scan of a table)
★★★	The resource uses non-proprietary formats (e.g., CSV instead of Excel)
★★★★	The resource uses URIs (uniform resource identifiers) to denote things, so that people can point at your stuff
★★★★★	The resources links data to other datasets to provide context

Further information on the costs and benefits of the openness rating can be found at Openness Rating | Open Government, Government of Canada.

Most assets on the Open Government Portal are rated with either one star (70%) or three stars (30%). The other three rating categories (two, four and five stars) make up less than one percent of the total number of assets on the portal. Typically, one-star assets are in more static file formats such as PDFs. Three-star assets are files that can be opened without proprietary software, such as any program in the Microsoft Suite. These assets tend to be in the comma separated lists (CSVs) format, which provides many benefits including greater accessibility and ease of updating/data manipulation. Departments should review older assets to determine whether appropriate updates can be made to boost their openness rating.

Shoot for the openness stars: Assess your open data and information assets against the criteria, costs, and benefits of the openness rating system to make appropriate updates that can get them to 5 stars.

2.8.2. Retention

Per the *Library and Archives Act*, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) "facilitates the management of information by government institutions" (subsection 7(d)) and "advises government institutions

concerning the management of information produced or used by them and provides services for that purpose" (subsection 8(g)). Under section 12 of the Act, LAC is empowered to provide the sole authorization to government departments for disposition of government records. The Act defines records as "any documentary material other than a publication, regardless of medium or form."

The Open Government Portal is a platform, accessible by all departments, that enables publication to GC records. TBS does not take ownership of the records, nor assume responsibility for their management. As such, within the context of retention, records on the Open Government Portal are considered as a consultation copy of the records that are managed in a corporate repository/system.

Open government falls under TBS's Administrative Leadership Program, with the goal to "lead government-wide initiatives; develop policies and set the strategic direction for government administration related to service delivery and access to government information, as well as the management of assets, finances, information and technology." As such, TBS is responsible for setting guidance for the management of data and information released on the Open Government Portal.

In the spirit of open government, data and information remain on open.canada.ca indefinitely. However, departments remain responsible for the maintenance of the official information and data assets within their corporate repositories and systems in accordance with their internal IM policies, and can dispose of them only in accordance with the disposition authorizations issued by LAC, per *Library and Archives Act*, section 12.

Exceptions apply to the indefinite access of data and information on the Open Government Portal, where specified retention periods are in place or when new retention periods are established; for example, in Appendix D of the *Directive on Proactive Publication under the Access to Information Act*. This approach supports the realization of Canada's Digital Ambition, where departments "prioritize the release of high-quality and demanded open data and information to allow the public to generate their own economic and social value." As researchers, businesses, other government jurisdictions and members of the public reuse open government data to innovate and solve problems, information and data assets may be integrated for different purposes than they were originally created. With this in mind, retention guidance seeks to maximize the life cycle of open assets to in turn maximize the potential for public value.

For more information on retention guidance for the Open Government Portal, contact the TBS Open Government Team at open-ouvert@tbs-sct.ca.

3. Appendix A: Privacy, security and confidentiality guidelines

3.1.   Introduction

In advancing open government, GC departments should balance the desire for openness and transparency with respecting privacy, security, confidentiality, and legal considerations associated with the requirements described in this document.

An understanding of these requirements is of particular importance when deciding what should be released as an open data or information asset. It is also important to consider that assets exist along a data/information spectrum, where they may be open, shared or closed based on their nature. For example, the asset's contents, size, publisher and intended audience may dictate where it falls along the data spectrum.

The purpose of the guidelines in this section is to identify privacy, security, and confidentiality requirements and the relevant guidance to departments and agencies releasing open data and information. It is predicated on the understanding that departments and agencies should not release protected, classified, or personal information to support open government.

3.2.   Principles

Apart from guidance provided related to protected, classified, or personal information, each department and agency's operational context varies and these principles are not strictly prescriptive in nature. Constantly evolving technology renders prescriptive guidance at risk of becoming quickly outdated. As such, departments should adapt and apply the following principles as appropriate.

3.2.1. Information categorization

As the originator of a record, each department is responsible for a plan, the implementation of information categorization systems and the review of data and information prior to release on the Open Government Portal.
   a) If it is third party information (government-to-government, government-to-industry, other), additional release mechanisms are up to department review
   b) Training and awareness on the requirements of the Portal are needed to reduce additional work for other departmental stakeholders such as ATI or Privacy officers
   c) Departments are also responsible for reviewing the metadata and telemetry of datasets to reduce the risk that combining smaller pieces of the data could enable a malicious user to action one of the risk scenarios

3.2.2. Legal and policy framework

Departments must continue to observe all applicable domestic and international laws as they relate to handling assets and should be respectful when considering which assets are being shared and released on the Portal.

3.2.3. Respect for privacy and persons

Departments must protect personal information by not releasing it on the Portal.
   a) Departments must ensure that all data and information released on the Portal contains no personal information and is sufficiently anonymized
   b) Departments should be transparent about how data and information will be collected, used and shared on the Portal
   c) Within an open-by-default environment, departments must identify situations and datasets that cannot be released or be made open by design

3.2.4. Forward planning

Departments should consider privacy, security and confidentiality when releasing records on the Portal. Considerations should include:

a) consulting internally with business line and data/information owners/stewards and ATIP offices to identify any potential risks to the public, the departments and the government as a whole

b) the Privacy Implementation Notice to ensure protection of privacy when releasing information about a small number of individuals

c) assessing privacy and security on an ongoing basis, as due diligence does not end with uploading a record; it is an ongoing responsibility to maintain the accuracy and completeness of all records

d) making plans prior to the release of records for their maintenance and periodic reviews of the privacy and security implications of the universe of relevant records available on the Portal

e) assigning clear accountabilities within departments and agencies for considering privacy and security implications of open government records

f) assigning clear and documented accountability for the information and data

3.2.5. Security and privacy incidents and remediation

Departments and agencies will take steps to ensure their ability to respond effectively in the case of a privacy breach or security incident.

a) In the event of any real or suspected security incidents, departments and agencies will respond in accordance with the now archived *Directive on Departmental Security Management* (DDSM), departmental and agency processes and procedures and, when applicable, the Cyber Security Event Management Plan (GC CSEMP).

b) In the event of any real or suspected privacy breach, departments and agencies will respond in accordance with the *Directive on Privacy Practices*. Departments and agencies should apprise themselves of the Digital Privacy Playbook and the Privacy Breach Management Toolkit. These privacy instruments identify causes of privacy breaches; provide guidance on how to respond, contain and manage privacy breaches; delineate roles and responsibilities; and include links to relevant supporting documentation.

3.2.6. Anonymization

When sufficiently anonymizing information and data, the following should be considered:

a) Anonymization should be applied only by officials who have been expertly trained in this area

b) Software for anonymization is not always available and may need to be developed

c) Effective anonymization may reduce the granularity of records and, as a result, data and information quality may decrease

d) Anonymization can be costly and require significant investments of resources, time and data processing

e) Extrapolation or aggregation risks may persist, despite anonymization efforts

3.3. Security and privacy context

3.3.1. Threat landscape

Open government services are provided through systems like the Open Government Portal that are publicly accessible. From a security perspective, these kinds of systems seek to balance broad public access, lowering cost and increasing efficiency against protection of classified information, privacy rights, and security protection requirements.

As a result, the security controls implemented in the Open Government Portal systems are designed to mitigate threats from diverse threat actors (e.g., hacktivists, organized crime, foreign intelligence) to protect privacy rights as well as the integrity and availability of classified information. Departments and agencies need to evaluate injury that could be reasonably expected from threat actors on a case-by-case basis as well as in the aggregate before publishing open government information.

3.3.2. Security and privacy risk statements

Open government, specifically maximizing the release of GC information assets, may pose the following security and privacy risks:
1. Sensitive GC information (including personal information and data) is disclosed to the public
2. Information or data that is not owned by the GC or by the department(s) using it is disclosed to the public
3. Integrity of the information or data is compromised by modifying or corrupting the records
4. Personal information and data about Canadians disclosed by the GC has not been sufficiently anonymized leading to re-identification and a privacy breach
5. Information or data in the open government environment is combined from multiple sources that collectively may reveal protected or classified GC information (personal or third party) and could also reveal discrepancies between GC information/data and other sources

3.3.3. Security and privacy risk scenarios

The following are real examples or hypothetical scenarios for the risks listed above.

i. Disclosure of sensitive information or data

Reference from ComputerWorld article, "Open Government Could Lead to Data Leak": In 2009, a document was accidently posted on "the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) Web site that listed all U.S. civilian nuclear sites along with descriptions of their assets and activities. The 267-page document was part of a federal government report being prepared for the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The document had been categorized as 'sensitive but unclassified' – or SBU – a [U.S.] government designation that usually includes at least some controls over disclosure. A large number of [U.S.] government documents fall under the SBU category."[1]

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[1] Vijayan, J. (2009, June 15). Open Government Could Lead to Data Leaks. Retrieved from ComputerWorld:
http://www.computerworld.com/article/2551066/security0/open-government-could-lead-to-data-leaks.html

ii. Disclosure of personal information

Reference from TechCrunch article, "AOL Proudly Releases Massive Amounts of Private Data": A commonly cited example occurred when America Online (AOL) released "anonymized" search results from 650,000 of its users. This turned out to be a case of very weak anonymization, since AOL failed to consider the fact that individuals often perform web searches for their own names, allowing interested individuals to significantly narrow the list of potential names right off the bat.[2]

iii. Modification of data

Reference from VeloNews.com article "WADA releases details of Fancy Bear hack": "The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) released details of the hack that led to the publishing of dozens of its private therapeutic use exemption (TUE) records, as well as specifics of its own response to the breach. The attack, which was perpetrated by the Fancy Bears' Hacking Group, obtained data from an Anti-Doping Management System (ADAMS) built for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. … The most substantial revelation is that WADA found inconsistencies between some of the illicitly published data and its own ADAMS data, suggesting possible manipulation of the TUE documents by the hacking group."[3]

iv. Aggregation of data

Reference from Neustar Research article "Riding with the Stars: Passenger Privacy in the NYC Taxicab Dataset": "In 2014 the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission released 173 million records of taxi trips from the previous year including details about every taxi ride (yellow cabs) in New York from 2013, including the pickup and drop off times, locations, fare and tip amounts, as well as using cryptographic hashing to de-identify the taxi's license and medallion numbers. Researchers were able to crack the code, and subsequently this dataset in combination with a small amount of additional information was demonstrated to reveal personal information not previously released to the public. For instance, the aggregated data could be used to calculate a driver's annual income or an individual's movement patterns, which raises privacy concerns."[4]

v. Extrapolation of data

(Note: This is a hypothetical but plausible scenario) A security and intelligence agency classifies the number of its employees as Secret. As part of the open government initiative, all standing contracts to purchase various common goods and services are published. A bit of investigation and comparison with known metrics for pricing office stationery and supplies per employee reveals within a very close margin the number of employees working for the agency.

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[2] Arrington, M. (2006, August 6). AOL Proudly Releases Massive Amounts of Private Data. Retrieved from TechCrunch: https://techcrunch.com/2006/08/06/aol-proudly-releases-massive-amounts-of-user-search-data/
[3] VeloNews.com. (2016, October 5). WADA releases details of Fancy Bear hack. Retrieved from VeloNews: http://www.velonews.com/2016/10/news/wada-releases-details-fancy-bear-hack_422291
[4] Atockar. (2014, September 15). Riding with the Stars: Passenger Privacy in the NYC Taxicab Dataset. Retrieved from Neustar Research: https://research.neustar.biz/author/atockar/

3.3.4. Resources

Privacy and security constitute important requirements for all orders of government, both domestic and abroad, and for diverse stakeholders, such as organizations, non-profits, researchers and private departments. Ample resources were expended by the working group to research and analyze these information sources, which include essays, principles, laws, technical papers and case studies. They have been included in the table below for reference.

Originator	Resource	Highlights
Basel Committee on Bank Supervision	Principles for effective risk data aggregation and risk reporting (2016)	Provides background, principles and the importance of effective risk data aggregation and risk reporting.
Berkeley Technology and Law Journal	Open data, privacy, and fair information principles: towards a balancing framework	"In this article we ask how these privacy interests can be respected, without unduly hampering benefits from disclosing public sector information. We propose a balancing framework to help public authorities address this question in different contexts" and potential issues: chilling effects, lack of control over personal information, social sorting and discrimination.
Berkley Law	Open Data Literature Review	Examines what is open data and the security surrounding it from a law perspective. Issues concerning: "The main challenges and dangers of open data are conceptualization, disparate impact and civil rights violations, invasion of privacy and lack of consent, the failure of re-identification, security breaches, and transparency as an end itself" and examines systems in use, and measures to mitigate danger.
Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic	Open Data, Open Citizens?	Open data and privacy considerations; issues; anonymization, re-identification; and pre-release and post-release strategies.
Centre for Open Data Enterprise	Briefing Paper on Open Data and Privacy	Reviews some issues surrounding the release of data to the public and privacy requirements, how to balance transparency and privacy, benefits and considerations for micro data, and aggregation issues and potential solutions and mechanisms to reduce risk.
Donald Cowan, Paulo Alencar, Fred McGarry	Perspectives on Open Data: Issues and Opportunities	This research project examines the uses of open data and some considerations that arise with its growing use, including privacy

		requirements. Mostly focuses on uses of open data and how to get the most out of it.
Government of Australia	Privacy Amendment (Re-Identification Offence) Bill 2016	This Bill "amends the *Privacy Act 1988* to prohibit conduct related to the re-identification of de-identified personal information published or released by Commonwealth entities …". The Bill introduces specific offences which provide that: ○ de-identified personal information must not intentionally be re-identified (section 16D) ○ re-identified personal information must not intentionally be disclosed (section 16E) and ○ an entity must: 1. notify a responsible agency if de-identified personal information is re-identified, intentionally or unintentionally 2. cease any other use or disclosure of the re-identified information and 3. comply with any directions from the agency about the handling of the information (section 16F)
Government of Canada	Security Categorization Tool	Outlines the importance of security categorization for the purposes of risk management. Also, three steps to security categorization: 1. inventory business activities and information assets 2. assess injury 3. identify business domains
Government of Canada	Privacy Implementation Notice 2020-03: Protecting privacy when releasing information about a small number of individuals	Provides guidance to departments on measures to help protect privacy when releasing data about a small number of individuals, when the intention is not to release the identity of individuals, in order to comply with the *Privacy Act*.
Jan Kucera, Dusan Chlapek	Benefits and Risks of Open Government Data	Strong benefit and risk analysis development from two consultation sessions. Including easy-to-read table.
Privacy Committee of South Australia	Privacy and Open Data Guideline (2014)	Defines personal information, spontaneous (risk of identification without any effort to do so) versus deliberate recognition, and assessing and managing privacy requirements.

Sunlight Foundation	How Governments are Safely Opening Up Microdata	This article examines the policies and processes that governments can take when opening potential sensitive microdata. It also investigates some of the issues that arise from the release of microdata.
UK, University of Manchester	The Anonymisation Decision-Making Framework	Provides a complete background on the principles of anonymization and addresses a need for a practical guide to anonymization to advance the government's goals.
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe	Principles and Guidelines on Confidentiality Aspects of Data Integration Undertaken for Statistical or Related Research Purposes	Concerned with the use of confidential information by national statistical organizations whose mandates are statistics gathering/researching in nature. Specifically, this document aims to outline guiding principles to mitigate any abuse such organizations might make of the confidential information they collect.
U.S. Department of Commerce	NIST Special Publication 800-60 Volume I: Guide for Mapping Types of Information and Information Systems to Security Categories (2008)	Standards to be used by all federal agencies to categorize all information, guidelines recommending the types of information to be included in each category, and minimum information security requirements in each category.
U.S. Department of Commerce	NIST Special Publication 800-188 (2nd DRAFT): De-Identifying Government Datasets (2016)	Practical advice and guidance to governments to de-identify their data.
U.S. Department of Commerce	NISTIR 8053: De-Identification of Personal Information (2015)	Provides an overview of de-identification issues and terminology. It summarizes significant publications to date involving de-identification and re-identification.
U.S.-Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT)	Protecting Aggregated Data (2005)	Discusses effective security management approaches and strategies to address the issues and to mitigate risks. By possessing such large volumes of data, however, departments assume certain risks and responsibilities. Consequences of theft or compromise of customer, partner or other data held by an organization.

4. Appendix B: Governance

4.1. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide high-level guidelines on implementing, improving and maintaining departmental governance and reporting frameworks to support open government initiatives, activities and reporting requirements. This section provides recommendations on what a governance structure for open government could look like. It is important to note that these are recommendations and suggestions. It is not expected that all GC departments will structure themselves based on these guidelines, as there is no one-size-fits-all approach for implementing open government.

4.2. Overview

The overall intent is to ensure that the scope of all roles and responsibilities that enable the continual release of eligible data and information are clearly defined, and that recommended governance structures and practices are shared, deployed and understood within all departments and agencies subject to the *Directive on Open Government*. Good governance in open government practices will allow departments to be more transparent, open and timely in providing Canadians access to government data and information. In turn, this will provide Canadians with increasing opportunities for innovation and economic growth and build greater trust in the GC.

Good governance in the open government space will provide the necessary structure to ensure that:

- open data and information are released in a timely fashion
- after consideration of privacy, security, and confidentiality requirements, high-value priority data and information are released first
- departments and agencies fully and competently comply with all release criteria
- approval processes are well understood and operate with efficiency
- all necessary resources are in place to support efficient operations
- planning and reporting are transparent and timely
- departments and agencies act as one cohesive unit
- required tools and training are provided
- support for culture change, open communications and problem resolution are in place

4.3. Audience

The intended audience for this information is those in key leadership roles to support open government within their department or agency, such as:

- chief information/data/security officer and staff
- IM/IT managers
- open government coordinators
- data custodians, stewards and managers
- researchers and scientists
- business owners
- ATIP offices
- others with a role in data and information management and dissemination

4.4.   Risks

The following list outlines potential risks of not establishing governance roles and responsibilities to effectively support open government:

- Lack of engagement across the organization
- Inadequate support on behalf of data owners, stewards and custodians
- Inadequate education and awareness across the organization
- Improper release of data and information / privacy breaches
- Unlawful collection/disclosure (sharing) of data
- Challenges meeting publication deadlines, specifically for publications requiring department-wide collaboration (e.g., packages of briefing material prepared for new or incoming ministers)
- Failure to achieve compliance and deliverables as mandated by the *Directive on Open Government*

4.5.   Best practices

The OECD defines open government as a "a culture of governance." To foster this open government culture and balance it with the ease of releasing open assets, leading departments across the GC have highlighted the following best practices.

Open government coordinators
Assign a dedicated open government coordinator to represent your organization, who actively participates in internal and external open government communities. This equips coordinators with the tools needed to effectively build awareness on the importance of open government and allows them to disseminate updates provided through government-wide governance meetings at the working and executive levels. Dedicated open government coordinators tend to have more opportunities to advance the file than coordinators who approach this role on the side of their desks.

Executive champions
Departments that have identified an executive open government champion tend to get more buy-in on key open government initiatives. They are also able to drive greater collaboration across strategic priorities in departments. Additionally, departments cited a significant advantage leveraging a champion to provide mentorship opportunities and attract resources to work on the open government portfolio.

Reporting through executive committees
Departments should recognize open government initiatives as an opportunity to drive better collaboration. In reporting on their open government activities beyond the government-wide committees coordinated by the TBS, departments can improve internal awareness at the executive level. Some departments have also worked to enhance awareness by inviting Treasury Board executives to make presentations on the importance of open government.

Building internal governance
Departments with their own internal working groups dedicated to open government tend to be more advanced in engaging policy leads to develop national action plan commitments or partner on other open government initiatives. Additionally, departments with dedicated open government contacts within each branch demonstrate a strong ability to collaborate and advance their open government activities. There are benefits from hosting informal working groups to engage more colleagues on the open government file.

4.6.　Roles and responsibilities

To successfully release government data and information, departmental stakeholders with key roles and responsibilities should be identified. In some cases, these new roles and responsibilities may simply be an addition to existing governance structures and terms of reference. It is critical that the appropriate stakeholders are engaged throughout the approval and release process.

In alignment with the *Directive on Open on Government,* departmental stakeholders are responsible for the following.

Departmental release process
- Establish a process to release departmental data and information assets to the open government portal
- Review potential assets for privacy, security, confidentiality, and other legal requirements
- Designate the appropriate level of approvals for release
- Ensure adequate prioritization, accuracy and timely release of data and information assets

Open and strategic management of assets
- Implement open-by-design principles in services, programs, and systems
- Ensure the eligibility for release as an open asset
- Support the development of releasable versions of assets deemed ineligible for release due to privacy, security and/or confidentiality
- Ensure the quality and completeness of assets in accordance with metadata requirements
- Ensure the retention of open assets on the open government portal for the maximum amount of time possible based on considerations for their public value and demand
- Develop and update an inventory of high-value data and information

Planning and reporting
- Ensure open government considerations are included in departmental plans

Governance
- Designate officials and coordinators responsible for implementing departmental open government functions
- Participate in TBS-led open government governance committees
- Ensure data and information are interoperable, compatible and complementary across the GC enterprise

Engagement
- Support engagement with stakeholders for the development of the departmental open government programs

Below are examples of **potentia**l roles and responsibilities.

Role	Process component	Responsibilities
Deputy/department head		Departmental accountability (public accountability): • Responsible for the requirements of the *Policy on Service and Digital* for open and strategic management of information (and data) Open information and open data: • "4.3.2.8 Maximizing the release of departmental information and data as an open resource, discoverable through the Government of Canada open government portal designated by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, while respecting information security, privacy, and legal considerations. • 4.3.2.9 Prioritizing departmental information and data to be added to the Government of Canada's open government portal, informed by public demand."
Information management official (chief information officers (CIOs) (formally the IMSO))	Publishing	• *Directive on Open Government* as defined in section 4 of the Directive
Business owner (DG-level)	Identification and review	• Considers which data and other information assets they are responsible for releasing (including exceptions for privacy, security, or confidentiality requirements) • Endorses the release of eligible data and information assets • Fosters transparency • Ensures that resources have been committed to support released information and data
	Transferring to Library and Archives Canada	• Maximizes the removal of access restrictions on departmental information assets of enduring value prior to transfer to Library and Archives Canada (LAC) as part of planned disposal activities by working collaboratively with LAC to define and implement the process

Role	Process component	Responsibilities
Data stewards and/or custodians (subject matter experts)	Identification and review	• Produces datasets or information assets • Validates content of data and information being released • Ensures the quality and validity of the information being released • Transforms the data into machine-readable formats that comply with open data formats • Provides bilingual metadata for the dataset or information assets • Provides timely ongoing support for the data and information released
Enterprise information management services or open government team	Identification and review	• Ensures that open government principles are considered when updating and creating new applications and databases by defining how to capture requirements at the onset of the process for project gating
Departmental open government coordinator	Identification and review	• Coordinates with business units to identify eligible assets to be released as open data and information; for example, creating an inventory of data and other information assets • Coordinates the management of the department's catalogue of data holdings registered with the Open Government Portal by ensuring that registrations (metadata) are consistently and meaningfully defined, resources and links to data are current and valid, and required updates to datasets are fulfilled (according to the agreed-upon schedule) • Acts as the central point of contact for public enquiries • Coordinates data releases, assisting data stewards/owners with receiving approval when required • Helps content owners with the release process (e.g., identification, preparation, approval mechanisms, and entry into the TBS Open Data Registry) • As needed, reviews data to be released prior to approval process, verifying that both the English and French versions of the data are consistent and error-free • As needed, provides recommendations to the chief information officer (CIO)/chief data officer (CDO) that the data release be approved

Role	Process component	Responsibilities
		• Serves as the point of contact for departmental open government activities, including internal coordination, monitoring, awareness and collaboration within the department, with TBS and with other departments, including participation in the open government coordinator community • Coordinates departmental prioritization efforts to respond to open data and open information requests in a timely manner • Provides support, training, awareness and communication in their department on open government and working in the open-by-default • Monitors and improves the departmental release process of open information and open data based on internal and external users' needs, technologies, legislation, regulatory and policy requirements
Federal Geospatial Platform (FGP) departmental representative	Publishing	• Manages FGP data publishing workspaces for their organization • Acts as the central user administrator for their department or agency • Liaises with CIO/CDO and departmental open government coordinator to coordinate inventory, prioritization and publication flows for geospatial data
Information/data management services	Identification	• Works with business units to identify eligible assets to be released as open data and information; for example, creating an inventory of data and other information assets • Manages the department's catalogue of data holdings registered with the Open Government Portal by ensuring that registrations (metadata) are consistently and meaningfully defined, resources and links to data are current and valid, and required updates to datasets are fulfilled (according to the agreed-upon schedule) • Acts as the central point of contact for public enquiries • Identifies data to be released prior to approval process, verifying that both the English and French versions of the data are consistent and error-free
Information technology services	Publishing	Recommends, designs, develops and tests tools to:

Role	Process component	Responsibilities
		• Convert the department's information into machine-readable formats that comply with open data formats • Make unstructured information available in open and accessible formats
Access to information and privacy office	Publishing	• Provides guidance on the compliance to *Access to Information Act* and *Privacy Act* and policies. Reviews requests to publish data and other information, as well as prior to transfer to LAC as part of planned disposal, as and when required. This also includes ensuring that data owners are knowledgeable of their department's privacy breach plans and procedures
Official languages	Publishing	• Provides guidance on the compliance with the *Official Languages Act* and policies by reviewing all requests to publish data and other information, as well as prior to transfer to LAC as part of planned disposal
Communications	Publishing	• Provides guidance on the compliance with communication acts and policies by reviewing all requests to publish data and other information, as well as prior to transfer to LAC as part of planned disposal
Security services (departmental security officer)	Publishing	• Provides guidance on the compliance with security acts and policies by reviewing all requests to publish data and other information, as well as prior to transfer to LAC as part of planned disposal
Legal services	Publishing	• Provides advice concerning legislative compliance by reviewing requests to publish data and other information, as well as prior to transfer to LAC as part of planned disposal, upon request

4.7.   Governance body (example)

Open government is a significant cultural change for most departments and agencies. This change can be successful only with active participation and the sharing of roles and responsibilities across the organization at all levels. The following diagram is a simplified example of a governance model that supports open government.
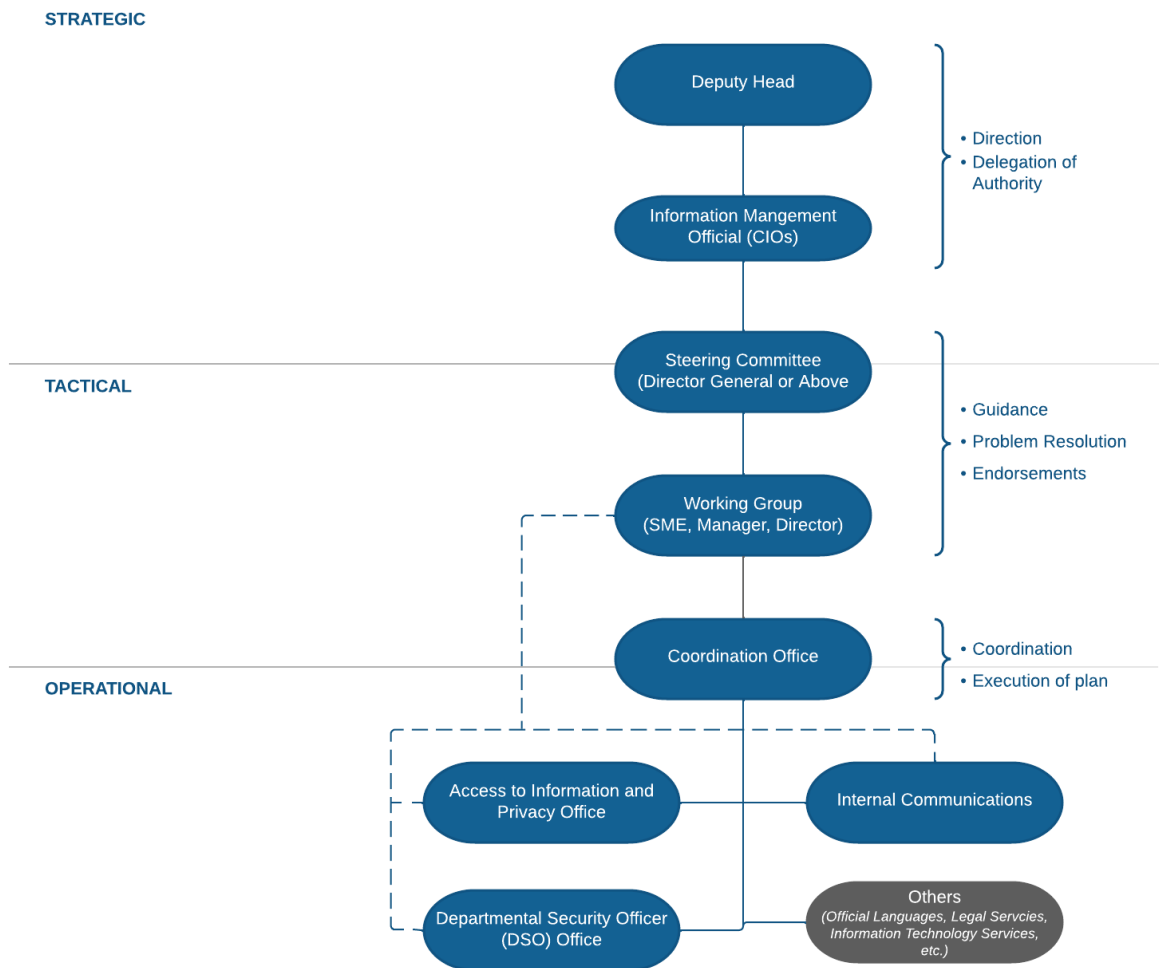
Figure 8: Governance model to support open government

This simplified example introduces three new bodies for the specific purpose of enabling effective open government decision-making and guidance (in many departments, these bodies may already exist as part of data or information management governance).

4.7.1. Departmental open government steering committees

General responsibilities include:

- providing advice on departmental open government strategies and activities
- defining the recommended approach for the implementation of open government, including the endorsement of open data and information release criteria and standards (value) and organizational capacity (ability to deliver)
- identifying opportunities for improved alignment across open government projects

An open government steering committee is often chaired by the departmental IMSO or CIO and is made up of business owners (typically director general–equivalent or higher) from across the department representing all business lines that generate data and information.

This body is concerned with the executive functions of open government governance including:

- approval of the department's yearly open data and information commitments (release targets)
- ensuring that open government activities are in alignment with organizational priorities
- business endorsement and executive support to releasing eligible data and information
- approval of supporting policy instruments

4.7.2. Departmental open government working groups

A cross-functional group with representation from the business and IT at the director or manager level. This body is primarily concerned with providing recommendations for how the department can meet the *Directive on Open Government*, as well as performing certain legislative functions of data governance including:

- identifying the need for policy instruments (standards, guidelines, toolkits, reference architecture, etc.) to support the delivery of open government; providing enforcement of approved policy instruments
- defining the approval process to ensure that data and information released in support of open government is fit for public consumption (due diligence of data risks in the areas of ownership, quality, privacy, security and legal)

Name	Mandate	Membership
The Open Government Coordinators Working Group (OGCWG)	Through the implementation of the *Directive on Open Government*, which falls under the *Policy on Service and Digital*, the GC expects the following results: - Canadians are able to find and use GC open data and information to support accountability, facilitate value-added analysis, drive socio-economic benefits through reuse, and support meaningful engagement with their government Members are to advance open government principles within their respective departments by meeting monthly to discuss subject matter and coordinating efforts relating to:	Members are working level, are open government coordinators in their respective departments and are leading the coordination of the implementation of open government national action plan commitments. Representation at both the policy and information management levels per organization is ideal. For questions about or to join the OGCWG, write to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

Name	Mandate	Membership
	• primarily, being a forum to exchange on open government best practices to mainstream open government in the federal government and support the coordinated implementation of open government throughout the government • supporting OGDG members to maximize, leverage and promote the release of open information and open data to support transparency, accountability, citizen engagement and socio-economic benefits through reuse (subject to applicable restrictions associated with privacy, confidentiality and security and requirements such as official languages and accessibility) • supporting OGDG members to identify difficulties or gaps in performance or compliance issues and proposing solutions • supporting OGDG members with consultations on open government–related discussions, tools, products and events and providing insights on how open government–related processes may be impacted • advancing government-wide open government efforts indicated in the GC's open government national action plans	
The Open Government Directors General	Through the implementation of the *Directive on Open Government*, which falls under the *Policy on Service and Digital*, the GC expects the following results:	Members are director general–level or equivalent who have clear responsibility for open government–related activities in their departments

Name	Mandate	Membership
Committee (OGDG)	• Canadians are able to find and use GC open data and information to support accountability, facilitate value-added analysis, drive socio-economic benefits through reuse, and support meaningful engagement with their government Members are to advance open government principles within their respective departments by meeting monthly to discuss subject matter relating to: • maximizing, leveraging and promoting the release of open information and open data to support transparency, accountability, citizen engagement and socio-economic benefits through reuse (subject to applicable restrictions associated with privacy, confidentiality and security and requirements such as official languages and accessibility) • identifying difficulties or gaps in performance or compliance issues and proposing solutions • assisting in the development and implementation of the GC's open government national action plans, including identifying implementation concerns early and strengthening the coordination and profile of open government activities • supporting TBS's decision-making by consulting on a variety of open government–related policies, discussions, tools, products and events	(such as open data and proactive disclosure), who are prepared to assume a leadership role to support key open government issues within their departments and/or at a government-wide level, or who are leading the implementation of open government national action plan commitments. Representation at both the policy and information management levels per organization is ideal. For questions about or to join the OGDG, write to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

Name	Mandate	Membership
The Canada Open Government Community of Practice (COGCoP)	The Canada Open Government Community of Practice (COGCoP) provides a space for Canadian jurisdictions to collaborate and share information on: 1. **making information and data easier to find** by improving search capacity on government websites 2. making more information and data **available in standardized formats** with improved metadata, tagging and indexing 3. being more open with Canadians by improving **policies and rules** so that government data and information is **open by default** 4. **proactively engaging** the Canadian public and giving them an opportunity for a two-way dialogue on the government's work	COGCoP's membership reflects the multiple levels of government in Canada and brings together members from the federal government, provinces, territories and municipalities. Membership is limited to one or two representatives from each participating jurisdiction, with expertise from a variety of domains. For questions about or to join the COGCoP, write to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.
The Canada Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Open Government (MSF)	The Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF) aims to advance constructive, ongoing dialogue on open government between the GC and non-government stakeholders. Establishing a permanent forum for dialogue provides a formal structure for regular, two-way communication between the government and its key open government stakeholders. This process is designed to achieve real gains in transparency, accountability and participation.	The MSF is composed of eight stakeholder members and four government members. Observers from the government or other sectors may be invited to meetings, as agreed to by members on an ad hoc basis. At least six stakeholder members must be representatives of not-for-profit organizations registered in Canada. For more information on the MSF, visit Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Open Government.

Name	Mandate	Membership
		To join the MSF, write to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

4.7.3. Departmental open government coordination office

The coordination office is concerned with managing the administrative functions of open government, including:

- acting as a central point of contact (internal and external) for all things open government
- working to mobilize the organization in meeting open government objectives/deliverables and activity planning, coordination and scheduling, stakeholder onboarding, establishment of working groups as required, etc.
- tracking and reporting the progress of open government deliverables and key performance indicators (KPIs) through support from Open Government Analytics and other sources
- providing open government awareness, education, guidance, and communication
- maintaining the inventory of data and information, including yearly prioritization of release targets (candidates)
- working with business units to disclose and catalogue their data and information holdings

4.8. Example process

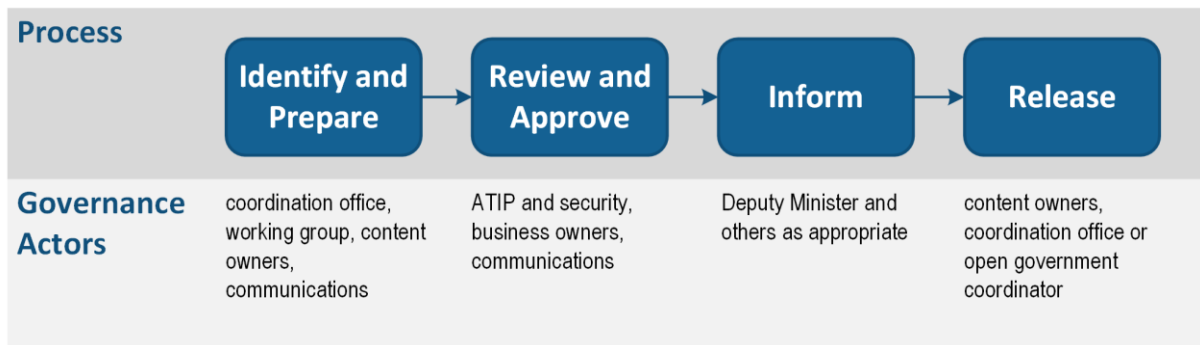The following example illustrates how the governance body supports the release of new data and information.

Figure 9: Example process

4.9. Additional resources

Information and data governance are broad topics. This information attempted to cover features of governance that are needed to effectively support open government activities. In many cases, open government requirements will be captured as part of other governing bodies (not dedicated to open government).

Those interested in additional information on governance, enterprise architecture, data management, or information management should contact TBS's Enterprise Data Team

(EnterpriseDataDonneesIntegrees@tbs-sct.gc.ca). In addition, TBS hosts a relevant working group, the Open Government Coordinators Working Group (OGCWG), which may offer additional guidance or help department and agencies connect with similar departments for knowledge-sharing. Write to open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca for more information on our working groups and committees.

5. Appendix C: Release scheme

5.1.   Categories, sub-categories and examples

This table is intended to:
1. provide examples of documents that may end up within the scope of open information
2. serve as a preliminary sort into the six categories proposed in the release scheme
3. provide examples of the types of assets departments may include (or must include due to proactive disclosure requirements) in their release scheme

It is not a final nor complete listing, and there is overlap. Review for continuity and feel free to suggest moving items. It is intended to give you a starting point for understanding the assets your organization generates.

Release scheme category and sub-categories	Examples
About us	**Who you are and what you do**
Organizational chart	Example: The Corporate Management Branch's organizational chart
Committees	Minutes from the OGDG meetings
Legislation	Regulations Interpretation guidelines
Our services	**Description of services and programs, including advice and guidance, publications, transactions and media releases**
Notices	
Media releases	
Leaflets, booklets, newsletters	
Services for the public	
Services for industry	
Services for other levels of government	
Our finances	**What you spend and how you spend it**
Grants and contributions	Required as proactive disclosure
Statements	Financial statements
Travel and hospitality	Required as proactive disclosure

Release scheme category and sub-categories	Examples
Contracts	Required as proactive disclosure
Position reclassification	Required as proactive disclosure
Minister's office expenses	Potentially required as proactive disclosure in the future
Our priorities	**Your priorities and how you're doing – strategies, performance, assessments and reviews**
Mandate letters	Required as proactive disclosure
Briefing packages for new ministers and deputy ministers	Required as proactive disclosure
Strategies (plans/planning ahead)	
Audits and evaluations	
Reports	Annual report Annual business plans Performance reports Impact assessments
Our policies	**How you deliver your functions and responsibilities**
Manuals	Service delivery handbooks
Policy	Policy documents
Procedures and guidelines	
Training	Training materials
Our lists	**Information required by legislation and other lists and registers related to your functions**
Summaries of completed ATI requests	Required as proactive disclosure
Other information of benefit to citizens	
Templates	
Frameworks	
Book of basics	
Reviews	
Dictionaries/glossaries	Terms and definitions

5.2.   Best practices

To release data and information effectively and efficiently, consider adopting recommended best practices. **Participate** and connect with the open government community; **format** and structure your data and information assets, then **publish** to the Open Government Portal; and continue to **learn** through available training and resources.

What	How	Why
P A R T I C I P A T E	Engage your IM and data management teams early	Information and data of high value should be managed in designated corporate repositories (e.g., Microsoft 365) to facilitate accessing relevant data and information for publishing to the Portal. If available, leverage automated tools in support of good IM and data practices, particularly during clean-up activities. For further guidance, visit the IM Toolkit.
	Seek help	Contact open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca for advice and technical assistance when publishing your open assets on the Open Government Portal.
	Join the community	The monthly Open Government Coordinators Working Group provides tips to help advance open government principles in your organization and is a forum to exchange best practices with your open government peers.
	Governance is key	Create a monthly internal open data working group to identify your organization's open data assets, create a network that fosters collaboration and share best practices.

What	How	Why
	Connect with comms	Work with your internal communications shops to promote newly released open datasets on the Open Government Portal and reach a larger audience.

What	How	Why
F O R M A T	Focus on data quality	Ensure that your data can be easily accessed and is accurate, coherent, complete, consistent, interpretable, relevant, and timely, in accordance with the Government of Canada's Data Quality Framework.
	CSV for machine-readability	Publish CSV files instead of XLS, as this format is more accessible and machine-readable. Ensure that your files align with the GC CSV Guide and are well-structured by performing a validation check with CSVLint; for JSONs and XMLs, use freeformater.com.
	Details on data dictionaries	Each open dataset should include a supporting documentation file, data dictionary, product specification file or web page. Supporting documentation explains your data content and structure to users who may not understand the acronyms, attributes, features, codes, government language or even errors found in your data.
	Accessible PDFs	Check whether your open information PDF asset is accessible by running an accessibility report.

Be long, not wide	In a well-structured dataset, each row should be an observation of the data and each column should be a variable that describes that observation = long data (correct). Wide data (incorrect) formatting may be popular within publications, but it will normally require a user to transpose the data before they can do analysis or create visualizations.
Boost comparability and interoperability	Adhere to the ODC principles by ensuring that open datasets use common reference data standards where appropriate. For example, those referencing Provinces and Territories should make use of the Reference data standard on Canadian provinces and territories.
HTTPS all day	If publishing open data by putting files on a departmental server, ensure that the links in your datasets are HTTPS. If they are not, users will not be able to access them; Google Chrome now blocks HTTP links since upgrading to version 89. For new publications, it is recommended that publishers upload their data files directly into the Open Government Registry to avoid issues associated with linking.
Metadata matters	Use plain language, avoid abbreviations and acronyms, begin the title with the name or subject of the asset, and ensure that the title of the dataset does not exceed 70 characters and that the dataset is fully translated and accessible.
Open Government APIs	To perform bulk dataset uploads and to automate updates, explore the integration of Open Government APIs by liaising with your internal technical representatives. For help, write to us at open-ouvert@tbs-sct.gc.ca.
Stay current	Test your open government portal records regularly and keep your data and information assets updated to ensure they remain accurate and seamlessly useable.

	Shoot for the openness stars	Assess your open data and information assets against the criteria, costs, and benefits of the openness rating system to make appropriate updates that can get them to 5 stars.

What	How	Why
P U B L I S H	Publish information and data	Release any ATI summaries and any data you have published on your departmental website on the Open Government Portal to best serve Canadians (see figure 4 for more information on why this is important).
	Leverage the power of place	Publish geo-enabled datasets containing addresses, geographic coordinates, or other location information on the Open Maps Portal to maximize their potential.
	Ready, set, publish	To publish open data and information on the Open Government Portal, create an Open Government Registry account.
	Inventory your data	An internal data inventory exercise can help identify your organization's data to determine what can be released as open data.
	Be mindfully open	Ensure that your release process includes privacy, security, and legal considerations to publish open data and information safely.

	The Open Government Portal	Publish your open data and information on the Open Government Portal under the Open Government Licence – Canada to enhance the discoverability of your assets from any search engine and ensure compliance with articles 4.3.2.8 and 4.3.2.9 of TBS's *Policy on Service and Digital*. Use Open Data Indexes so that data is released under an open licence and automatically available on Google Dataset Search.
	Always be documenting	As a tool for the open government principles of accountability and transparency, when seeking approvals include the Release Checklist, along with any documentation that shows how each criterion has been met.

What	How	Why
L **E** **A** **R** **N**	Understand the Licence	Get familiar with Canada's Open Government Licence to ensure that you own the rights and/or have secured sufficient rights to make your material available to the public.
	Design for open by default	When designing initiatives, consider how data and information governance can help you incorporate openness in your planning. For more on Governance, see Appendix B.
	Tap into resources	Use the Quick Reference Guide for techniques and criteria on ensuring that your open dataset meets the GC's accessibility level of WCAG 2.0 AA, and the Accessibility Checker to test the accessibility of open data file formats in compliance with the Web and Open Data Validator (formerly WPSS), a tool maintained by Public Service Procurement Canada.

Support Indigenous Sovereignty	Get informed on whether and how opening data holdings might impact Indigenous Peoples by learning about the First Nations Principles of OCAP and the National Inuit Strategy on Research; by connecting with your internal Indigenous Services group; and by working to co-develop approaches with Indigenous people wherever possible.	
Know your role	A clear understanding of roles and responsibilities are essential to the efficient release of your department's assets. Ensure that you know where you fit in and who should be supporting you to execute your responsibilities. For more on roles and responsibilities, see Appendix B: Governance – Section 4.6. Roles and responsibilities.	
Analytics are your friend	To gauge how Canadians are using your open data, refer to your departmental Open Government Analytics.	
Gain knowledge and sharpen skills	For open government–related training, refer to the Open Government GCcollab page, Apolitical, StatCan's Data Literacy Catalogue and Canada School of Public Service.	

6. Appendix D: Definitions

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
anonymization	Process by which personal information has been de-identified to the point that there is no serious possibility of re-identification, by any person or body using any additional data or technology at this point in time. Note: As technology advances, anonymized information might be re-identified.	• Remove name, address, postal code • Remove any other information that can be combined with other data to identify an individual

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
asset	Data and information that can be leveraged to create value and benefits through public reuse.	• Search Government Contracts over $10,000 • Federal Whales Initiative – Freshwater and sediment data (Pacific Region) – Open Government Portal
Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network (CKAN)	The Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network, or CKAN, is an open-source data management system. CKAN is free to download and use. It is used by the GC to power its Open Government Portal. The CKAN source code for the Open Government Portal and Registry is shared on GitHub for reuse by other governments and anyone who would like to leverage the GC's work. The CKAN data management platform is in use by numerous governments, organizations and communities around the world, with 31 national governments and 72 local or regional governments having identified that they are using the platform on CKAN.org.	• Open Government Portal • Australian government portal
data	Set of values of subjects with respect to qualitative or quantitative variables representing facts, statistics, or items of information in a formalized manner suitable for communication, reinterpretation, or processing.[5]	• Total unique applicants by Province/Territory and gender for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit • Percentage of population with postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree by census division
data preservation	Data preservation is defined by the Alliance for Permanent Access Network as "The processes and operations in ensuring the technical and intellectual survival of objects through time." This is part of a data management plan focusing on preservation planning and metadata. Whether it is worthwhile to put effort into preservation depends on the (future) value of the data, the resources available and the opinion of the designated community of stakeholders.	
data producer	A data producer is a person or group responsible for generating and maintaining data.[6]	

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[5] Government of Canada. (2019, August 2). *Policy on Service and Digital*. Retrieved from https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32603
[6] W3C Data on the Web Best Practices

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
data quality	A characteristic of data determined based on its access, accuracy, coherence, completeness, consistency, interpretability, relevance, reliability, and timeliness. High data quality is an indicator of fitness-for-purpose, which means that data is both usable and relevant in a primary or other use context.[7]	
data users	Data users are any individual or organization that accesses, downloads or republishes data, or who uses data to develop apps, visualizations, reports and other information products or services.	
datasets	Datasets are a data format defined as a specific convention for data representation; that is, the way that information is encoded and stored for use in a computer system, possibly constrained by a formal data type or set of standards.[8]	• Fuel consumption ratings • Immigration Overview - Permanent Residents • Canada's National Highway System
de-identification	Process by which personal information has been modified to remove identifiers to a degree that is appropriate in the circumstances. De-identified information carries a residual risk of re-identification.	
file format	File format is a standard way that information is encoded for storage in a computer file. It specifies how bits are used to encode information in a digital storage medium. File formats may be either proprietary or free and may be either unpublished or open.[9]	• Plain text (in a specified character encoding, ideally UTF-8) • Comma separated variable (CSV) • Portable document format (PDF) • XML • JSON • Turtle [Turtle] • HDF5

[7] Government of Canada. (2022, May 4). 'Appendix A: Glossary of Terms' in *GC Data Quality Framework*. Retrieved from https://wiki.gccollab.ca/GC_Data_Quality_Framework#Appendix_A:_Glossary_of_Terms

[8] Digital Humanities Curation Guide

[9] W3C Data on the Web Best Practices

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
geospatial data	Geospatial data is data that contains implicit or explicit geospatial referencing, such as geographic coordinates, a street address, jurisdictional boundary, or any other reference that represents the location of a specific feature, location or area on the Earth's surface.[10] These datasets should be released through the Federal Geospatial Platform (FGP).	• Cadastral Information for Bella Bella 1 • Second Language Immersion Schools in Canada
high value data and information	Data and information that the reuse of which is associated with important benefits for the society and economy, usually through integration or analysis to identify trends, socio-economic conditions and inequalities, and help address national or global challenges.[11]	• Directive on Open Government
information	Knowledge captured in any format, such as facts, events, things, processes, or ideas, that can be structured or unstructured, including concepts that within a certain context have particular meaning. Information includes data.[12]	• Documentary resources • Messages • Content • Structured data • Paper publications • Multimedia resources • Physical artefacts
information management	Information management is a discipline that directs and supports effective and efficient management of information in an organization, from planning and systems development to disposal or long-term preservation.	
interoperability	The ability of different types of electronic devices, networks, operating systems, and applications to work together effectively, without prior communication, to exchange information in a useful and meaningful manner. [13]	Data Catalog Vocabulary and Open Government Metadata Application Profile are examples of standards that facilitate interoperability for open data.

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[10] Adapted from: ISO 19101.

[11] Government of Canada. (2023). *Directive on Open Government*. Retrieved from https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=28108

[12] Government of Canada. (2019, August 2). *Policy on Service and Digital*. Retrieved from https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32603

[13] Government of Canada. (2019, August 2). *Policy on Service and Digital*. Retrieved from https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32603

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
link	A link is a typed connection between two resources that are identified by Internationalized Resource Identifiers (IRIs) [RFC3987] and is comprised of (i) a context IRI, (ii) a link relation type, (iii) a target IRI, and (iv) optionally, target attributes. Note that in the common case, the IRI will also be a uniform resource identifier (URI) [RFC3986] because many protocols (such as HTTP) do not support de-referencing IRIs [RFC5988].[14]	
linked data	Linked data refers to an approach to publishing data that puts linking at the heart of the notion of data, and uses the linking technologies provided by the Web to enable the weaving of a global distributed database [LDP-PRIMER].[15]	Linked Data Web - World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
machine-readable data	Data in a form that can be used and understood by a computer without human intervention.[16]	Veterans Affairs Canada Annual Prescription Drug Expenditures
machine-readable formats	A machine-readable format is a file format that can be used and understood by a computer to read data.	CSV
metadata	The definition and description of the structure and meaning of information resources, and the context and systems in which they exist.[17]	Open Government Metadata Application Profile

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[14] W3C Spatial Data on the Web Best Practices

[15] Ibid.

[16] Government of Canada. (2023). *Directive on Open Government*. Retrieved from https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=28108

[17] Government of Canada. (2010, June 24). *Standard on Metadata.* Retrieved from https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=18909

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
National Action Plan on Open Government	An international commitment to making the GC more transparent and accountable. It also gives Canadians the chance to take part in how government makes decisions. Canada has been a member of the international Open Government Partnership (OGP) since 2012. The OGP brings together national and sub-national governments from around the world who are committed to the open government principles of transparency, accountability and participation. To remain a member of the OGP, the Government of Canada must meet certain criteria, including: • develop and carry out a national action plan every two years • work with the public to create this plan • track progress as the plan is carried out to make sure the government is following through on their commitments	National Action Plan on Open Government 2022-2024 National Action Plan on Open Government 2018-2020
open by default	The open by default principle mandates that data or information should be open and available for the public to find, access and use, unless there is a specific, pressing reason why that data or information cannot be made open, and that reason is clearly communicated to the public. For the purposes of the Open by Default Pilot, this term refers to items that are in working drafts, meaning they are not final versions and will likely not meet the official languages or accessibility requirements.	
open data	Open data is structured data that is in a machine-readable open format, freely shared and used, and can be built on without restrictions.	Data available here: Open Government Portal
open dialogue	Open dialogue, in this context, is open, honest and sincere engagement and constructive two-way dialogue between the GC and interested stakeholders and citizens, which results in better policies, programs and services for Canadians.	Open Dialogue
open format	An open format is a file format with no restrictions, monetary or otherwise, placed upon its use and that can be fully processed with at least one free open source software tool.	• CSV • XML • JSON

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
open government	An open government is a governing culture that fosters greater openness and accountability, enhances citizen participation in policy-making and service design, facilitates innovation, and creates a more cost-effective, efficient and responsive government.	
open government coordinator	The open government coordinator is the official responsible for coordinating open government activities within their GC department or agency. This person is also responsible for representing their organization at Open Government Coordinators Working Group (OGCWG).	
Open Government Licence	The GC Open Government Licence removes barriers to the reuse of published government data and information, regardless of origin. This licence was issued in 2013 and has since been adopted not only by the GC, but also by several provincial governments and municipalities across the country.	Open Government Licence
Open Government Partnership (OGP)	The OGP is a multilateral initiative established in 2011 that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. To become a member of the OGP, participating countries must endorse a high-level Open Government Declaration, deliver a country action plan developed with public consultation, and commit to independent reporting on their progress. Canada indicated interest in joining the OGP in 2011 and formally became a member in 2012 with its first Open Government Plan.	Open Government Partnership
open government action plan	To become a member of the OGP, participating countries must deliver an Open Government Plan outlining commitments to make their governments more open and accountable. To date, the GC has produced four open government national plans.	Canada's Plans to the Open Government Partnership
Open Government Portal	The Open Government Portal is a website where users can explore how the GC is working with the national and international open government community to create greater transparency and accountability, increase citizen engagement, and drive innovation and economic opportunities through open data, open information and open dialogue. The main objective of the Open Government Portal is to provide access to open assets, including datasets and information. For more information, refer to the Open Government Portal site (open.canada.ca).	open.canada.ca

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
Open Government Registry	The Open Government Registry is a web-based application that is used internally by the GC to add government resources that will be published on open.canada.ca.	Open Government Registry
open information	Information that is freely shared without restrictions.[18]	• Publications • Organization structure details • Governance details (decision-making) • Financial reports • Annual reports • Organization plans • Briefing materials (to management, Parliament) • Operational information (rules, guidelines, practice)
Open Maps	Open Maps is a section of the Open Government Portal website that makes available all GC open geospatial data, services and applications for use by Canadians. Through Open Maps, Canadians can access and explore the wealth of geospatial data that has been collected by many sources, including scientists, surveyors, satellites, and marine-based and land-based sensors. It has been processed, interpreted and structured for use in a variety of applications. Open Maps allows users to combine, visualize and analyze geospatial data and collaborate with other Canadians.	Open Maps
open policy-making	Open policy-making is the process of creating government policy with direct contributions from the public and other external parties. It includes the mindset, process and tools that create an open-by-default environment for governments to engage with citizens and other stakeholders in the design and delivery of stronger policies and programs.	
open source code	Open source software code is made available so that users can access, modify and redistribute it.	• Drupal • CKAN

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[18] Government of Canada. (2014, October 9). *Directive on Open Government*. Retrieved from https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=28108

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
originator	The originator is the main author or group that has authored a specific piece of data for consumption. This can include notations, minutes, journal articles or formal documentation for publication. Authorship relates to the individual or group of personnel who were party to the development of a portion of electronic data that is to be shared. It is the originator who is responsible for establishing the data's sensitivity.	
personal information and data (or personally identifiable data)	Personal information and data is any information or data that, when used alone or in combination with other available resources, may identify an individual.	Data about an identifiable individual, such as religion
public engagement	Public engagement is the planned process of allowing the public's views, opinions and perspectives to be heard and incorporated into the various facets of government work.	
records	Any documentary material, regardless of medium or form.[19]	
re-identification	Re-identification is the process of attempting to discern the identities that have been removed from de-identified data.[20]	
resource	CKAN (the system that powers the Open Government Registry) uses the term "resource" to denote one of the individual data objects (a file such as a spreadsheet, or an API) in a dataset.	
searchability/discoverability	Searchability or discoverability is the ability to seek out and find a particular dataset or information asset. It is typically associated with the ability to easily find a particular dataset or document using a simple keyword search.	
standard	A set of documented rules or guidelines that enable consistent and repeatable description, representation, structuring, and sharing of data and information.[21]	ISO 19115 – Geographic Information - Metadata

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[19] Government of Canada. (2022, October 1). *Access to Information Act: R.C.S., 1985, c. A-1.* Retrieved from https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/a-1/page-1.html#h-176

[20] NIST IR 8053, section 2.4, p. 9 (Note, now draft 800-188 in 2nd draft version)

[21] Government of Canada. (2022, April). *Final Report of the ADM SEP Working Group for Data and Information (Draft)*. Retrieved from https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/gcwiki/images/6/69/EN_-_Final_report_to_ADM_SEP_2022-04-07_%28DRAFT%29.pdf

Term (English)	Definition	Examples
structured data	Structured data refers to data that conforms to a fixed schema. Relational databases and spreadsheets are examples of structured data.[22]	Open Data Inventory
structured information	Structured information is digital information residing in fixed fields within a repository.	
third party	A third party is any party that was not part of the original drafting of the information set but has been given access through a request to a second party that holds the information after the originator. As an example, a private firm provides information or intellectual property to the government for a specific purpose. Should a third party request from the government to access to portions of this information, the third party rule of no distribution would be invoked.	
transparency	Transparency is ensuring that the public (including civil society and private sector organizations, academic and media representatives, and citizens) has the data and information needed to understand the workings of their government.	
unstructured information	Unstructured information is digital information that is often created in free-form text using common desktop applications such as email, word processing or presentation applications.	
vocabulary	A vocabulary is a collection of terms for a particular purpose. Vocabularies can range from simple, such as the widely used RDF Schema, FOAF and Dublin Core, to complex vocabularies with thousands of terms, such as those used in healthcare to describe symptoms, diseases and treatments. Vocabularies play a very important role in linked data, specifically to help with data integration. The GC's Open Government Portal uses vocabularies to help describe data and information and enable more efficient searching of Canada's open data and open information.	Data Catalog Vocabulary (DCAT)

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[22] W3C Data on the Web