



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

City of Chicago

Joseph M. Ferguson
Inspector General

180 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 2000
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Telephone: (773) 478-7799
Fax: (773) 478-3949

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 29, 2011

CONTACT: (773) 478-0534
Jonathan Davey

Inspector General Announces New Transparency Initiative “Open Chicago”

Citing the importance of promoting and enhancing transparency in City government Inspector General Joe Ferguson today announced “Open Chicago,” a new transparency [initiative](#).

Hosted on the City of Chicago’s Office of Inspector General’s (IGO) newly redesigned website, the initiative is aimed at increasing the public’s understanding of City government and to further the IGO’s mandate of promoting economy, efficiency, effectiveness and integrity in the administration of the programs and operations of the City government.

“The mission of the IGO is to promote efficiency and effectiveness in government programs. Vindication of that mission requires accountability, which is elusive without transparency,” said Inspector General Joe Ferguson. “Public information, necessary to the IGO’s understanding and assessment of government operations, is equally necessary to making City government more transparent to Chicago residents. With this initiative, the IGO is committing itself to making public data available utilized in the course of our work to inform our understanding of what the City does and how it does it.”

Open Chicago will have three main components: (i) increasing the transparency of the IGO’s audits and program reviews; (ii) publishing and linking to public, non-confidential City data on the IGO’s website; and (iii) identifying best practices in government transparency and accountability.

The goal of Open Chicago is to make City government more transparent. When appropriate, the IGO will ask the City departments responsible for public data to publish the data themselves. If City departments agree to these requests and publish the information in a manner that meets the Open Chicago criteria for true transparency, the IGO will simply link to this information on its website.

In response to the first Open Chicago request from the IGO, the City has published its [Collective Bargaining Agreements](#) with local unions, [Single Audit Reports on Federal Grants](#), as well as the [list](#) of property the City leases. The IGO has provided these links on its website. Previously, the IGO posted an Excel version of the City’s [budget](#).

“The City has made strides in committing itself to transparency, but gaps remain. The IGO is uniquely positioned to shore up those gaps, and our office has the knowledge to provide context for and analysis of City data, as well as the capabilities for making that data accessible to the public,” said Mr. Ferguson.

The IGO will periodically update its Open Chicago [page](#) with new datasets. Questions or suggestions for new data can be directed to openchicago@chicagoinspectorgeneral.org. Follow the IGO on Twitter at [ChicagoIGO](#) for the latest Open Chicago information, as well updates on how the IGO continues to fight waste, fraud, abuse, and inefficiency in Chicago government.

###