



June 16, 2023

Dear Interim Executive Director Sherry Walker-Cowart:

I received the PAB's Data Transparency Police Proposal on May 19, 2023. I support the idea of being transparent with our data and will continue to keep our open data portal accessible to the public. As you know, we have a contract with Measures for Justice, and the work has already begun. The goal is that a majority of your proposal is accomplished along the way with Measures for Justice. With that said giving an accurate timeline to implement each recommendation will be based on how long it takes to complete the work with Measures for Justice. Our Office of Business Intelligence is working diligently on the data daily.

Please see the below comments for each proposal:

2023-01-1: Ensure that all public datasets are current and machine-readable by providing data in a format accessible with commercially available software, such as .csv.

All datasets on the Rochester Police Department's (RPD) Open Data Portal (ODP) are currently available for download in multiple machine-readable formats, including .csv, .kml, GeoJSON, and Shapefile. All future datasets on the ODP will maintain these downloading options.

2023-01-2: Include datasets on the open data portal on complaints about police misconduct, instances of officers shooting firearms, use of force, arrests, calls for service, traffic and pedestrian stops, and crime reports.

As part of the City's response to Executive Order 203 and the RASE Commission, the RPD has partnered with Measure for Justice in collaborative data work that includes a community component for prioritization of publicly available data. Each of the datasets mentioned in this PAB recommendation has already been identified for future public release. Data availability is impacted by antiquated collection processes spread across legacy applications, paper forms, and physical files requiring a significant amount of standardization and automation. Emphasis has been placed on modernization, through systems integration, technology acquisition, and improved access to data for non-RPD maintained technologies (e.g., Computer-Aided Dispatch, Arrest Booking, etc.). The 50A discipline portal is already publicly available. RPD is currently working with Measures for Justice on these issues and a concrete timeline has not yet been developed.

2023-01-3: Report incident-level information for all datasets, including location, time, demographic information, and dataset-specific elements, as listed in this report.

Location, time, and many dataset-specific elements are already available for all ODP data. We do not want to risk identifying victims and need to limit what data we release that could potentially expose a victim's identity. We cannot say yes or no at this time since we do not know what the datasets will contain and therefore cannot provide a timeline for when this may be available.



2023-01-4: Code all incident data and officer-related data with unique identifiers to allow users to link datasets.

Whenever possible, the Office of Business Intelligence will make available the dataset's primary keys – fields that hold a unique identifier for each record – which can often be linked across datasets given the overlap of similar information collected for different purposes (e.g., crime reporting, complaints, calls for service data, etc.). The availability of possible linkable primary keys can be impacted by gaps in data collection requirements and data entry errors. The open data portal also contains a codebook for each dataset available allowing users to identify the field names and field descriptions to ease in linking data. However, this will not allow a one-stop shop to cross reference all activity an officer is involved in. RPD is currently working with Measures for Justice on these issues and a concrete timeline has not yet been developed.

2023-01-5: Continually evaluate datasets to adhere to best practices, using the Police Data Transparency Index and examples from other agencies as guidance.

RPD is open to working with the PAB to establish an index that could be used for regular evaluations. The Police Data Transparency Index from the Vera Institute may be an effective tool but RPD would request access to the other indexes that PAB also reviewed.

2023-01-6: Maintain an up-to-date, downloadable dataset of complaints with incident-level information, including complaint source (internal or external), location (RPD section, beat, ZIP code), time (occurrence, complaint, investigation), officer and civilian demographics, allegation category, specific allegation, investigation finding, discipline, final disposition, appeal status.

The RPD is open to a new quarterly and annual report from the Professional Standards Section that would include some of the information you recommend. However, precautions need to be taken to avoid revealing information that could reveal the identity of a complainant and officers during the process. This may include limiting date, time, location, and officer information. RPD is currently working with Measures for Justice on these issues and a concrete timeline has not yet been developed.

2023-01-7: Create an up-to-date, downloadable dataset of officer firearm discharge with incident-level information, including fatalities, justification, accidental discharge, body-worn camera footage, location (ZIP code), time, and officer and civilian demographics.

RPD needs to explore a way to capture this data and what information we may release about officer firearm discharges. When incidents are active criminal investigations we need to be cautious about what is put out publicly. We would not release BWC for all firearm discharges, this would be on a case-by-case basis or follow the foil process.

2023-01-8: Create an up-to-date, downloadable use-of-force dataset with incident-level information, including data elements in the FBI's use-of-force data collection program and information about an internal review of the incident.

This is an area that RPD is currently working on with Measures for Justice. We need to see what data is available and what we will be able to release. "Information" about the internal review of the incident would have to be better defined based on the fields collected. RPD is currently working with Measures for Justice on these issues and a concrete timeline has not yet been developed.

2023-01-9: Create an up-to-date, downloadable arrest dataset with incident-level information, including arrest charge, use of force, use of Mental Hygiene Detention, location (ZIP code), time, and officer and civilian demographics.

The data review for this recommendation is already underway. Changes in the County's arrest booking system in FY2022-23 will require a mapping process to bridge the new system with the legacy data. Currently, the Office of Business Intelligence does not have access to the data in this process. We would not release information about mental hygiene detentions as that could identify individuals and could become a HIPAA issue. RPD is currently working with Measures for Justice on these issues and a concrete timeline has not yet been developed.

2023-01-10: Create an up-to-date, downloadable call-for-service dataset with incident-level information, including location (ZIP code), time (origin, dispatch, closing), officer or civilian initiated, call type, dispatch result, outcome, priority level, City of Rochester Person in Crisis Team (PIC) dispatch, Monroe County Forensic Intervention Team (FIT) dispatch.

The data review for this recommendation is already underway. Changes in the County's Computer-Aided Dispatch system in FY2021-22 required a mapping process to bridge the new system with the legacy data which OBI has in progress. The timeline is unknown for this.

2023-01-11: Create an up-to-date, downloadable dataset on traffic, bicyclist, and pedestrian stops with incident-level information similar to California's RIPA data collection program.

Mirroring the RIPA data collection program is a massive undertaking that would extend well beyond the RPD. There is a Community-Advisory Board that will be developed under the Measures for Justice collaboration that will also make data recommendations on datasets like the ones listed above. Our first step is to complete the work with Measures for Justice and make this data public. We do not capture certain data that RIPA collects.

2023-01-12: Publish schedules and materials for live or online training.

RPD recently entered a partnership with Benchmark Analytics which includes a modernization of department training record keeping. Some training will be available on the open data portal but it will not be all training and we would not put live training on the internet. This proposes a strategic and operations risk.

2023-01-13: Maintain the existing up-to-date, downloadable crime dataset with additional incident-level information, including location, time, demographics (officer, victim, accused), and charge.

This currently exists on the open data portal for all Uniform Crime Reporting Part I Crimes, without individual demographics. OBI has an existing project underway to expand the available crime categories to match the FBI's new National Incident-Based Report System. Where applicable, demographic data could also be made available. There is no timeline for this.

2023-01-14: Add a contact email for section offices on the RPD Contact Information webpage.

A request has been made for email addresses to be created for the patrol sections which will be put on the city's website once IT creates the email addresses.

2023-01-15: Implement a version control system that tracks specific changes to rules, regulations, and orders.

I do not agree with this proposal as we do not want to confuse the public with out-of-date policies and changes. They are internally stored and could be foiled if necessary.

2023-01-16: Maintain historical versions of rules, regulations, and orders to allow an analysis of changes over time.

I do not agree with publicizing old policies. Historical versions exist but only current rules, regulations, and policies are on the open data portal.

2023-01-17: Create up-to-date, downloadable budget datasets with information for each division or unit, including personnel and associated costs, the number and associated costs of equipment (i.e., guns, TASERs, ShotSpotter, KIPs, electronic surveillance tools, drones, cars, tanks, helicopters), full contracts with external vendors.

RPD budget information is already publicly available in the City's budget book, broken down by Bureaus. This includes personnel costs.

2023-01-18: Create an up-to-date, downloadable chase dataset with incident-level information, including date, time, location (ZIP code), the reason for pursuit, pursuit vehicle speed (police and pursued vehicle), accidents, cost of repairs, injuries (officer, bystander, subject).

The professional Standards Section is currently working on digitizing pursuit information. Once this process is completed we will have to see what data can be placed into a downloadable format. This is currently a work in progress and there is no timeline for when this will be completed.

2023-01-19: Engage an outside agency to carry out regular data integrity audits, comparing a random sample of publicly available data with body-worn camera footage.

The scope and methodology of these audits would need to be better defined before RPD would agree to them.

Very truly yours,



David M. Smith
Chief of Police

CC: Malik Evans, Mayor City of Rochester
Miguel Melendez, City Council President
Linda A. Kingsley, Corporation Counsel