

TO: Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission  
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SUBJ: Open Government Working Group Update  
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This is my update to the commission on recent activity by its Open Government Working Group.

The Working Group has had one meeting (September 5) since the last commission meeting.

The current primary focus of the working group is providing support to city staff on two documents

- an open data directive, a formal directive from city management to all city staff)
- an open data handbook, an informal e-document that explains open data principles and practices

Previously, we had hoped to have staff present the open data directive to the commission by this time, and that has not happened. Before that can happen, the working group needs to complete its input to the draft, and city management needs to review the draft.

The main issue reviewed by the working group is ensuring that the work mandated by the directive is reasonable and cost effective, and recognizes the need to prioritize efforts.

Other open government activity in the past month includes:

- The City Council passed a FY2012-13 budget that includes \$250K “seed funding” to create an Innovation Office, and support two new full-time employees. Statement on the budget adoption: <http://www.austintexas.gov/news/city-council-adopts-fiscal-year-2012-2013-budget>
- Code for America conducted a successful “hackathon” on September 8. I estimate approximately 30-50 people participated throughout the day. City CIO Stephen Elkins, CTM employees Matt Esquibel and Charles Purma, and Councilmember Laura Morrison all attended. The event website is here: <http://codeacrossaustin.wikispaces.com/>
- In April, the City Council adopted an ordinance to move campaign finance filings from paper and PDFs to an online searchable database. I am working with a group of people who are trying to crowdsource a solution, to help reduce costs and schedules. This was one of the projects worked at the hackathon. I estimate that we are 60% complete on a demonstrable proof-of-concept.
- I've been asked to captain a “Code for America Brigade” in Austin. The CfA Brigade program directly engages community members to deploy, maintain, and sustain civic technology and open data infrastructure for a place. A local brigade could play an important role in helping capture the benefits at the end of the year-long CfA fellowship, this December.
- There will be an “ATX OpenGov Meetup” next Tuesday, Sept. 18, 7pm at Monkey Nest Coffee, 5353 Burnet Rd. Meetup information here: <http://www.meetup.com/cfabrigade/Austin-TX/>