



Open Data Portal: Transforming Illinois Through Open Data Data Management, Analytics & Visualization

State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology

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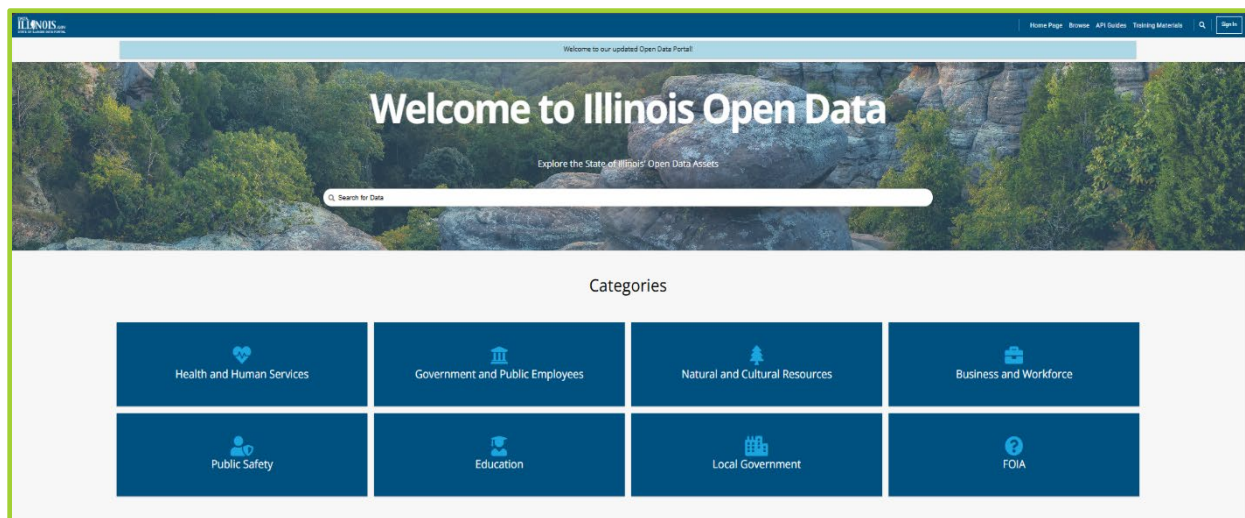
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Executive Summary

A New Era for Illinois Open Data

Illinois continues to strengthen its commitment to transparency and data-driven decision-making through the strategic expansion of its statewide open data capabilities. In January 2025, the [Illinois Open Data Portal](#) was launched, marking a successful migration from the legacy CKAN platform to the Tyler Technologies Data & Insights environment. This data migration addressed several key challenges faced by the previous system, including security vulnerabilities, maintenance difficulties, limited user experience functionality, and issues with data quality and accuracy.

The Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) State Data Practice team coordinated with dataset owners across various state agencies, such as the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (DFPR), Department of Public Health, Department of Agriculture, Department of Human Rights, Department of Insurance, and others, to make crucial data more accessible to the public. This platform introduced several improvements, including streamlined data integration, automated schedule refreshes, and enhanced security standards, achieving the goal of strengthening state data infrastructure and improving access for all users.



Idea

The Path to a Data-Driven Government

Prior to this project, state government data was scattered across multiple agencies, resulting in a fragmented, inefficient experience for users seeking access. Residents, businesses, researchers, and policymakers were required to search numerous agency websites or submit formal requests to obtain even basic information. Many datasets were outdated, inconsistently published, or not publicly available, hindering timely, informed decision-making. Internally, agencies depended on manual processes to locate and share data, straining staff resources, causing delays, and leading to inefficiencies such as redundant data collection. The absence of a centralized inventory made it difficult to determine what data existed, thereby undermining transparency and public trust.



A centralized data portal provides a single, reliable access point for users to discover and utilize public data. By consolidating many datasets from multiple agencies and standardizing publication practices, the portal aimed to reduce fragmentation and eliminate numerous manual processes—an approach that would enable agencies to share data more efficiently and reallocate staff time previously devoted to repetitive requests. Additionally, the portal would increase the visibility, accessibility, and usability of high-value datasets for the public, thereby enhancing transparency and operational efficiency throughout state government.

Importantly, the Illinois Open Data Portal would significantly improve how constituents could interact with state government by making information easier to locate, faster to access, and more reliable. For businesses and researchers, the portal could facilitate quicker, data-driven decisions



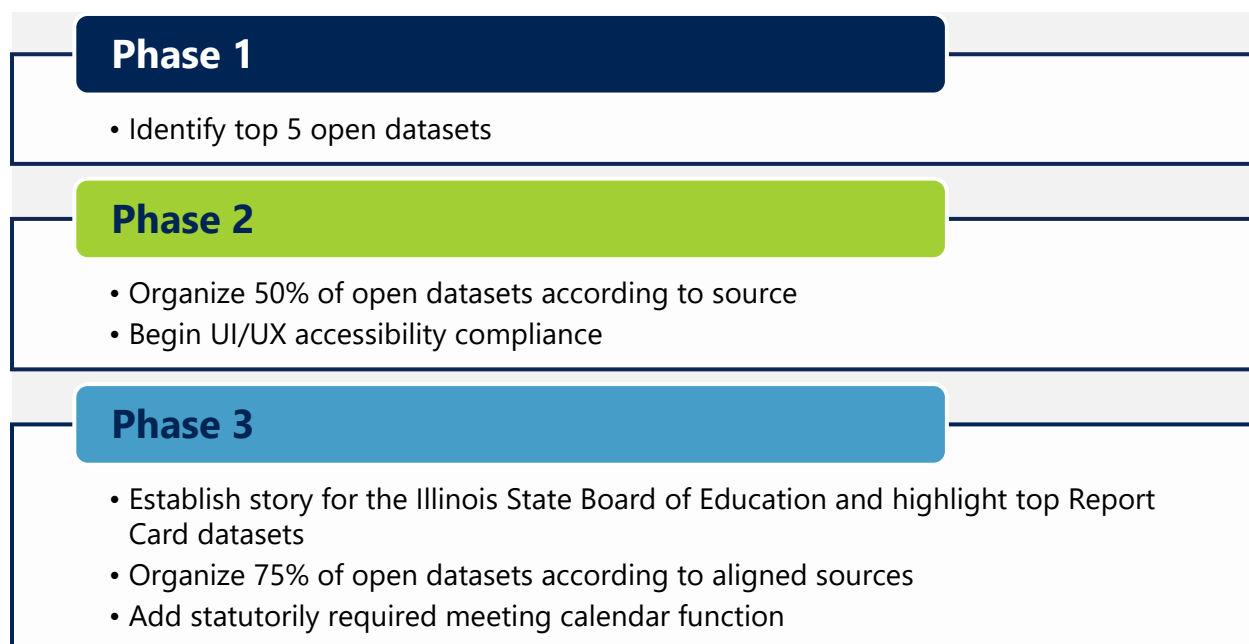
without redundant effort, while community organizations could benefit from reduced barriers to data use for advocacy, program development, and funding applications. For local governments, the portal would establish a foundation for more informed policymaking and digital transformations. Centralizing and opening data enhances current services and creates scalable capabilities to inform future decisions, strengthen public trust, and support a more responsive, data-driven government.

Implementation

Building a Culture of Data Sharing

For this project, data sharing rather than technology development represented the primary challenge during implementation. The state addressed this challenge through a **phased roadmap** aimed at building trust, standardizing processes, and demonstrating early value.

Phased Roadmap



The process began with technology selection and procurement, followed by platform configuration and the initial onboarding of high-value datasets. A soft launch introduced a core set of data to validate feasibility, while subsequent phases focused on scaling by expanding agency participation and increasing dataset volume. Key milestones included documenting dataset refresh intervals, surpassing more than **100 published datasets**, and launching self-service publishing tools that enabled agencies to contribute directly. Ultimately, the project expanded to more than **260 datasets across 19 state agencies by January 2025**, each with clearly defined ownership and update responsibilities.

Successful execution required coordination among a broad network of stakeholders. The project was led by the DoIT State Data Practice team, with active participation from state agency data stewards, IT leaders, public information officers, and executive sponsors. External partners, including platform providers and data advisors, contributed to both the technical foundation and governance strategy.

The portal was developed using Tyler Technologies Data & Insights platform (Socrata) and integrated with existing agency systems. Equally important were the processes established: a consistent metadata schema aligned with national standards, and a governance framework specifying how and when data should be published. Collectively, these elements established the portal as the authoritative source of state data, reducing duplication and enhancing accuracy across agencies.

Key challenges included uneven data readiness, competing agency priorities, and the necessity for secure, scalable publishing. These issues were addressed through targeted onboarding support, a comprehensive data publishing guide, and secure authentication through Okta to protect and streamline access. Adoption was promoted through hands-on training, regular progress updates, and recognition of agencies contributing high-value datasets, reinforced by executive level communications emphasizing the strategic importance of participation. Risks such as data quality concerns, resistance to change, and long-term sustainability were mitigated through a tiered data review process, strong executive sponsorship, and the integration of portal operations into ongoing budgets. Success resulted from treating data sharing as both cultural and operational transformation, establishing a foundation for continued growth and long-term impact.

Framework

- **Collaborative Network:** Success relied on the coordination of a broad network including the DoIT State Data Practice team, agency data stewards, IT leaders, public information officers, and executive sponsors.
- **Operational/Technical Foundation:** The project established the portal as an authoritative source through the use of the Tyler Technologies Data & Insights platform, Okta secure authentication, a consistent metadata schema, and a formal governance framework.
- **Strategic Transformation:** Long-term sustainability and adoption were secured through targeted onboarding, hands-on training, recognition for high-value contributions, and integrating portal operations into ongoing agency budgets.

Impact

Driving Impact Through Open Data

Prior to the Illinois Open Data Portal, access to Illinois state data was slow, inconsistent, and often inequitable, favoring those with the resources or expertise to navigate fragmented systems or submit formal requests. As part of this modernization initiative, more than **890 outdated datasets** were retired and were not carried forward to the new portal. Now, the same information is available through a single platform, shifting the approach from reactive to proactive. The Illinois Open Data Portal now hosts more than **290 datasets** across several categories of state and local government agencies including Health and Human Services, Business and Workforce, Government and Public Employees, Public Safety, and Local Government. Since the portal's launch, the top dataset, Professional Licensing data from DFPR, has accumulated just over **2 million visits (2,030,489)** and over **43,000 downloads, with overall downloads above 73,000**, demonstrating a sustained demand. High-value datasets that previously required manual fulfillment are now accessible through self-service, saving time for the public and agency staff while reducing administrative costs and duplications.

Quick Facts

2M+ visits to top dataset
(Professional Licensing)

2.2M+ portal visits
across top datasets

50K+ total downloads
across top datasets

53K+ combined visits to
live dispatch logs



The impact of the portal is evident across several dimensions. For constituents, it provides faster, easier, and more reliable access to information that directly influences decisions, such as license verification, public safety research, or workforce and health analysis. For state agencies, the portal streamlines operations by reducing record requests and establishing a single authoritative source, thereby improving data accuracy and internal efficiency. The Illinois Department of Revenue's (DOR) property transfer data contains over **6.5 million rows** that are accessible to real estate professionals, assessors, and researchers without any intervention needed by DOR staff. The Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Department of Public Health [vaccination coverage dashboard](#) connects users to view data by the selected school year and by specific types of immunization, including measles, mumps, chickenpox, TDAP and more.

The portal was architected to be available for local government datasets as well. This capability has removed barriers to data access, enabling broader participation in advocacy, planning, and economic activity. Real-world applications include Winnebago County Sheriff's Office and the City of Rockford Police Department both publishing live [72-hour dispatch](#) call logs that are updated hourly through the portal, generating over **53,000 visits** that can categorize data according to incident type and Reporting District.

The Illinois Open Data Portal establishes the foundation for a more responsive, data-driven government. Its greatest long-term value lies in what's possible, including scalable data sharing across more agencies, prioritization guided by user behavior, and the extension of infrastructure to small and local government. The resulting network effect, as cities and counties adopt the platform, indicates a future in which shared data ecosystems replace siloed systems. As usage patterns continue to inform publication and improvement priorities, the state is positioned to align its data strategy with real-world demand. Eventually, this approach supports better policy decisions, more efficient government operations, and a more informed public, transforming open data from a compliance requirement into a strategic asset that shapes the future of governance.



"What began as a commitment to open data has evolved into a platform for public storytelling. By upgrading our portal with Socrata's advanced capabilities, Illinois transformed raw government datasets into compelling, accessible narratives that citizens can engage with."

This wasn't just a technology upgrade; it was a fundamental shift in how we think about the relationship between government data and the people it serves."

Florence Castro-Wright
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