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# New York City Shines New Light on Public Contracts and Hearings with Dramatic Expansion of Public Records

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***Growing collection of more than 300,000 procurements, contract awards, public hearings and other notices will now be immediately available online.***

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced a powerful new tool to increase government transparency with the launch of an expanded City Record Online (CROL). CROL is now a fully searchable database for **all** the notices contained in the City Record newspaper – including schedules for public hearings, land-sales and contract awards in accordance with Local Law 38 of 2014. Until now only a small subset of information was searchable online. Residents and small businesses can also sign up for email notifications and all the data will be available on the Open Data Portal, increasing New Yorkers access to important government information.

The expanded database at [nyc.gov/cityrecord](http://nyc.gov/cityrecord) will let New Yorkers search:

- **Contract notices and awards for \$1.2 billion of goods and services** that are procured by the City each year.
- **Schedules for 750+ Public Hearings and Meetings each year**, covering neighborhood issues such as zoning changes, liquor licenses, and sidewalk café applications.
- **Regulatory changes for 95 City Agencies, Boards and Commissions**, including topics related to schools, land use, small businesses, and more.
- **Hiring notices and other changes in City personnel.**

“The City Record newspaper has carried the important notices of City business for more than a century. Now New Yorkers will have full access to this information at their fingertips – making it easier learn about contracting opportunities, public hearings and more,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “My administration strives to make it simpler than ever for all New Yorkers to connect with City government.”

“We are not only making more information accessible to the public, we’re also making it more user-

friendly”, said **Stacey Cumberbatch, Commissioner of the Department of Citywide Administrative Services**. “We are proud to help advance the Mayor’s vision of a more transparent and open government.”

“Mayor de Blasio is ushering in a new era of government transparency as his administration puts online one of the oldest print publications in the country,” said **Minerva Tantoco, Chief Technology Officer for the City of New York**. “By enabling real-time email notifications and posting this information in the Open Data Portal, we’re planting the seeds of increased civic engagement and new business opportunities.”

“The City Record holds a wealth of information critical to New Yorkers that, up until now, was only available in a very limited format. Working with DCAS, the Mayor’s Office of Technology and Innovation, and New York City’s civic technology community – and in keeping with DoITT’s commitment to increase access to technology to all New Yorkers – we’re thrilled the public is now able to use this data in new ways,” said **Anne Roest, Commissioner of the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications**. “I commend Commissioner Cumberbatch, the City Council, and the City Record Online Working Group for their collaborative efforts with DoITT on this essential project.”

“Providing easy access to contracting, purchasing and employment information potentially opens up government business to diverse New Yorkers. The City Record Online, together with the recently updated Publications and Open Data portals, creates new opportunities for residents to access government information,” said **Pauline Toole, Commissioner of the Department of Records and Information Services**.

“This council is committed to making city government as transparent and accessible as possible,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “Making these documents more accessible to the public is a simple, but significant way to contribute toward that goal. I thank my colleagues on the Council and the de Blasio administration for their partnership on improving and increasing transparency for all New Yorkers.”

“The City Record is the most important newsletter you’ve never read. City contracts, public meetings and notices of major changes to our city’s structure are routinely published in a hard edition, but not in a machine-readable format online -- until now. I am proud to have passed legislation unlocking searchable public information -- a treasure trove for those who want to better understand the city or simply need access to current information that affects them,” said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. “Thanks to the Mayor for recognizing the essential importance of the City Record and BetaNYC and other civic partners for working to make this legislation into a reality. New Yorkers must be able to find the updates that affect them in a format that they use.”

The City Record has been published every weekday – except for legal holidays – since 1873. Both the newspaper and the online searchable version are produced by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS).

In 2014, the New York City Council approved Introduction 363-A, now Local Law 38 of 2014 which requires that the City Record be posted online in a searchable and downloadable format. The legislation, introduced by Councilman Kallos, was signed into law by the Mayor on August, 7 2014.

Mayor de Blasio also expressed his gratitude to the public-private partnership that is helping make New York City a model for open government. The public partners, the Information Technology team at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, and the Mayor's Office of Tech and Innovation collaborated with civic technologists in the development of CROL and its addition to the Open Data Portal.

"Cracking open unstructured data is always an adventure. Cracking open NYC's most valuable newspaper has been historic. Never before has the public had this level of access to the City Record team and its underlying data," said **Noel Hidalgo, Executive Director and Co-Founder of BetaNYC**. "BetaNYC and community partners are honored to have worked with the city to develop free and open source tools for all New Yorkers. Today, on the City's GitHub page, you can download tools that will churn through the City Record and enhance its usability. Over the next year, we are super excited to continue this partnership and improve this dataset. We are honored to pioneer a path that will make the City Record useful to all."

"Ontodia is very proud to have helped with the City Record Online Working Group project this past year. Though a lot of work is still ahead of us, working shoulder-to-shoulder with City personnel in unlocking this unique trove of NYC data, has been a great experience and a model for public-private collaboration. I hope it becomes the norm for building the 21st century government we all expect and deserve," said **Joel Natividad, CEO and Co-Founder of Ontodia**.

"Citizens Union is pleased to see Mayor de Blasio publicly announce implementation of the local law putting the city record online. Technology is a powerful tool to improve the way in which the public is informed about city government and the decisions it makes. As a result of his administration's actions, the public will now be able to more easily find information about the city's laws, public meetings, hearings, and rules changes. Today is a victory for the public and transparency," said **Dick Dadey, Executive Director of Citizens Union**.

"NYPIRG congratulates the Mayor and City Council for helping make its myriad business and civic opportunities more easily available to the public," said **Gene Russianoff, Senior Attorney at NYPIRG**.

"A big thumbs up to Mayor de Blasio and his team for taking this important step towards 21st century, open, online government. This is an exciting day for New York City open data, open records and civic technology. This new website and online database put a treasure trove of basic information about the workings of city government online in a useful, digital form that will lead to many insights and improvements in how the city does business and spends public funds," said **John Kaehny, co-Chair of the NYC Transparency Working Group**.

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