

City of Madison

Problem Identification: City Service Usage Levels

1.0: Contact Information	
City Data Team Lead	E. Anderson, Finance, eanderson3@cityofmadison.com
City Agency SME's	D. Faust, IT
UW Madison Lead	Tyler Caraza-Harter (tylerharter@gmail.com)
Project Team Members	

2.0 Problem Statement (max 200 words) <i>Prompt: What's the problem we are trying to solve? What is actually happening? Where does the problem exist? How do you know this is a problem?</i>
<p>City of Madison Board, Committee, and Commission (BCC) meetings transitioned to a virtual format for the first time in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>This has led to changes in the nature of BCC meetings: for example, citizens wishing to speak at BCC meetings are less bound by geography.</p> <p>These changes, in turn, may have implications for the BCC's. In the short term, this may include changes to how BCC's are staffed and facilitated. In the long term, this may include changes to how BCC's are created and used as legislative bodies.</p>

3.0 Impact Statement (max 200 words) <i>Prompt: What change would you like to see happen? What should be happening?</i>
<p>In order to better understand these potential changes, the City wishes to form a statistically-based understanding of the nature of these virtual meetings. This includes analysis of meeting length, content, and registered citizen speakers.</p> <p>These analyses may be descriptive or predictive. A descriptive analysis would characterize existing data in terms of the variable suggested above, and others. A predictive analysis would predict dependent variables like number of speakers or meeting length based on other factors of the meeting. Students interested in natural language processing can also analyze the linked agendas and minutes for meetings.</p>

4.0 Service Change Statement <i>Prompt: What are the results you are trying to get with this project?</i>	
Current State	Future State
The new virtual format for City of Madison Board, Committee, and Commission (BCC) meetings has led to changes in the meetings' nature. These	Descriptive and/or predictive models relating BCC meeting characteristics like length, speakers, and content will help inform the City about the nature of virtual BCC meetings.

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changes are understood on an anecdotal level, but no statistical analysis has been conducted.	
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5.0 Project Success Statement

Prompt: How will we know the project is successful?

In order for the City of Madison to better understand the nature of virtual BCC meetings, UW Madison students will statistically model characteristics of such meetings.

6.0 Data Resources

The following data resources are available to support this project.

There are two datasets, one describing meetings, and one describing speakers at these meetings. The Meeting_ID field is a common bridge between the two.

Together, the datasets describe BCC meetings, and speakers at these meetings, including:

- Meeting length
- Meeting content
- Number of citizen speakers
- Citizen speakers' location
 - Note that some area zip codes, such as 53716, are shared between Madison and other cities

For students interested in natural language processing, more detailed information about meeting content can also be found in the linked PDF's containing each meeting's agenda and minutes, which are in an unstructured text format.

One dataset can be found here: <https://data-cityofmadison.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/board-committee-commission-public-comment-data>.

The other dataset's post to the City Open Data Portal is pending, and in the meantime, can be requested from Tyler.