

Tulsa

Rebounding from a ransomware attack and significant staff turnover, strong leadership from Mayor GT Bynum helped the city leverage its CDA engagement to establish new methods for sharing data across agencies and create new positions to oversee ongoing innovation.

Highlights

Developed a new analytics server that allows multiple agencies working on issues [like homelessness](#) to share data, conduct comprehensive analyses, report on collective metrics, and build dashboards.

Hired the city's first Data Analytics Manager and a new Chief of Performance Strategy and Innovation to lead the city's data work.

Created the city's first citywide data strategy, including an updated data governance committee and policy, a citywide data inventory to support a disaggregated data strategy, and a plan to increase data skills across the Tulsa workforce.

Background

The City of Tulsa came to the City Data Alliance having just filled a long-vacant Chief of Performance Strategy & Innovation role and on the heels of a ransomware attack that affected more than 18,000 city files. With new leadership and the attack behind them, the team was ready to reignite efforts to incorporate data into decision making and upgrade their performance management.

Mayor G.T. Bynum has been an advocate for using data to measure performance and inform policy making since he was elected in 2016 and earned [media attention](#) during the CDA convening for his focus on using data to reduce inequity across the city. Bynum has instituted more than 50 measures that inform change in the city's policies and practices, and is overhauling the city's budget process to establish a system that will fund programs and services according to their performance.

His charge to the Tulsa CDA team: Establish systems to collect data that his leadership team could use to make decisions, evaluate resources, and test ideas to better serve residents through continuous improvement.

"We have developed buy-in with our senior leadership team, with our department directors, and with the residents of Tulsa in the value of using data ... in making decisions and improving performance of city services," Bynum said. "But we're ready to take that work to the next level. And our participation in this Alliance will continue that work."

Impact

With the support of CDA, the Tulsa team was eager to get to work on a citywide data strategy that included an updated data governance committee and policy, a citywide data inventory used to support a disaggregated data strategy, and a focus on developing data skills across the Tulsa workforce, supported by a new Data Analytics Manager.

Shortly before Tulsa began its CDA work, the city hired a new Chief of Performance Strategy and Innovation, Annie Drewry. Drewry's hire signaled Tulsa's commitment to building systems and creating a workforce culture that prioritizes linking data and decision making.

During CDA engagement, city data analyst Rodney Gottschalk was promoted to the newly established role as Data Analytics Manager. He hit the ground running in April 2023, using the citywide data strategy as a roadmap for his work.

The team introduced a server to encourage data sharing and holistic analysis across city departments. Databases within the server will allow cross-functional teams to collaborate, create dashboards and know that they are working with secure, clean data. The server was piloted by the Human Resources and Streets and Stormwater departments, a compelling test case as these divisions have very different needs.



G.T. Bynum
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In Tulsa we use data to bring people together and solve problems! Honored to be one of 22 cities in North and South America selected to participate in the [@BloombergDotOrg](https://twitter.com/BloombergDotOrg) City Data Alliance – giving us the opportunity to take our work to the next level.

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