



INSPECTOR GENERAL ALERT

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

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Artificial intelligence (AI) is a rapidly emerging and evolving technology that has the potential to significantly impact the way the City operates. AI is a generic term that is used to describe a broad field of computer science that enables computers and computer systems to exhibit intelligent behavior. Proper use of AI will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of City operations and communications; however, AI also poses risks that must be mitigated to ensure proper operations of City government. The following is intended to assist the City in being aware of risks related to AI usage by City staff and provide information related to best practices in AI usage.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USAGE

The responsible usage of AI has the potential to improve operations through:

- increased efficiency and productivity,
- better information for decision-making,
- enhancements in the delivery of services, and
- cost savings.



RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USAGE

The first step in ensuring responsible usage of AI within the City is to identify risks that are associated with the use of AI. The most common risk areas include the potential for:

- Bias and discrimination – AI typically uses information/data from many sources to perform its activities. When those sources of information/data are discriminatory or biased, any work product by the AI may be biased or discriminatory.
- Insufficient transparency – The algorithms and sources of information/data used by AI are often not easily explained or readily apparent, which can impact public trust when the results of AI are questioned or come under scrutiny.



- Data security and privacy protection – Generally, any information provided to AI for analysis is exposed to the public. Therefore, if confidential or private information is provided to an AI for analysis, the confidentiality of the information may be breached.

- Other risks – The use of AI may make some jobs obsolete, and incorrect conclusions/decisions may be reached if the output from AI is incorrect and not independently validated.

RISK MITIGATION

As the usage of AI becomes more prevalent, the City will become increasingly exposed to the risks associated with AI usage. To help mitigate those risks, there are many steps the City can proactively take, including:

- Develop clear policies for the use of AI and periodically reviewing/updating those policies due to the rapid evolution of AI.
- Educate public officials, staff, and the public on the City's use of AI.
- Implement safe and ethical practices such as assessing risks prior to deploying systems that use AI, incorporating human involvement in AI processes, disclosing when AI is used to help foster transparency, and establishing controls to protect personal and confidential information.



CONCLUSION

While the increased reliance on AI is an exciting prospect for the City, we should ensure we are also identifying and mitigating the corresponding risks.

