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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Milwaukee Data Initiative Hosts Open Data Hack-a-thon

Milwaukee Data Initiative (MDI), an advocacy workgroup committed to changing the way Milwaukee uses and shares critical data, is hosting an open data 'hack-a-thon' on February 23, 2013. Open data supporters, designers, programmers and data analysts will be travelling from around the state to create open data applications, data scrapers, maps and data sets. Data subjects include housing, economic, city service, parking, transit and crime data from the city, county, state or private companies.

“Why open data? Why adopt systems that share data? What are good data practices, formats and licenses? The hack-a-thon will get people started with those questions, along with hands-on acquiring data and visualization tools,” said MDI member, Michael Diedrick. “We have urban planners, social scientists, librarians, cartographers, designers and developers attending. Everyone interested in open data is welcome to participate, regardless of technical prowess.”

The agenda for the day includes:

- Meet and Greet (10am)
- Pitch ideas for data scraping, transformation or map/app/visual creation (10:30am)
- Assemble teams and begin (11am)
- Presentation of progress (3pm)
- Final presentations (?)

We have a variety of people attending already, including:

- Jeff Arp, City of Milwaukee - *GIS and mapping specialist*
- Todd Clausen, Nonprofit Center - *Social data guru and map specialists*
- Michael Diedrick, Byte Studios - *Website, application and mobile app developer*
- Nancy Olson, City of Milwaukee - *CIO and manager of the City's data services*
- Matt Richardson, SmartWave - *IT and communication strategist*
- Allan Vestal, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel - *Journalist, news application developer*

The Milwaukee Data Initiative is a grassroots advocacy effort driven by creative designers, software developers, urban planners, data managers and technologists to get organizations in the private, nonprofit and public sectors to adopt data sharing standards. Our goal is to educate and support data sharing to create opportunity within the community and further the mission of profit, non-profit and government organizations.

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