FREE CHECKLIST FOR PUBLIC FLEETS

Use AI to Find and Fix the Gaps in Your Fleet Records

A free checklist for public fleets

A practical Yes / Partial / No checklist for city, county and state fleet shops that want trustworthy answers from their own records, before they lean on any AI tool.

From Civic Fleet Services

Field	Fill in
Organization	[Organization Name]
Department / division	[Public Works / Fleet Services Division]
Completed by	[Name, Title]
Date	[Month Day, Year]
Next review	[Month Day, Year]

Read this first

This is a free sample checklist, not legal advice. Adapt it to your agency. State public-records, retention and privacy rules differ. Check with your records officer, IT and counsel where those apply.

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Current as of November 2026.

Companion piece: This checklist is about whether your *data* is clean and complete enough for AI to give answers you can trust. Rules for how staff may use AI tools (approved tools, what not to paste in, human review, vendor AI features) live in the separate **Fleet AI Use Policy Template** from Civic Fleet Services. Use both. This one does not replace that one.

Why this matters

AI does not fix bad records. AI is a tool that helps you find the gaps in your fleet data. People still fix them. It reads whatever you already have (gaps, typos, duplicate asset numbers, blank labor fields) and answers with the same confidence either way.

If Asset 1042's odometer jumps backward every other fuel fill, or half your work orders say "misc repair" with no code, an AI summary of "highest-cost assets" or "PM compliance" will sound sharp and still be wrong. The shop will chase ghosts. The budget office will get a clean-looking number nobody can defend.

This checklist is the unglamorous part: can your own systems answer basic questions about your fleet without a three-day scavenger hunt? If the answer is mostly no, fix the data first. The tools will wait.

How to score each item

Mark every line:

- **Yes:** true for essentially the whole fleet, and you can prove it from the system of record in a few minutes.
- **Partial:** true for some classes, shops or years, or true only with a spreadsheet side-car.
- **No:** missing, unreliable, or only in someone's head / a personal file.

Count only the **Yes** answers at the end. Partials do not count as Yes.

1. Asset register

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
1	Every active asset is on one official list (owned, leased, assigned, surplus-pending). No "shadow" lists that disagree.	☐	☐	☐	
2	One asset number per active asset (for example, Asset 1042); the VIN or serial on the door matches the title and the system of record.	☐	☐	☐	
3	Active / down / disposed is current in the register; disposed assets never look active on reports.	☐	☐	☐	
4	Class / type, department assignment and in-service date are filled for every active asset.	☐	☐	☐	

2. Meters and odometers

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
5	Meter type is correct per asset (miles, hours, or both) and matches how the shop actually runs it.	☐	☐	☐	
6	Recent meter readings exist for active assets (no multi-month blanks on assets that still work).	☐	☐	☐	
7	Obvious bad readings get caught: big jumps, reverse readings, copy-paste of the last value. Someone fixes or flags them.	☐	☐	☐	

3. Work orders and repair history

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
8	Repair work lands on a work order tied to the correct asset number (not a generic "shop" bucket).	☐	☐	☐	
9	Each work order states what failed, why, and what was done, in words another tech can follow months later.	☐	☐	☐	
10	The shop uses a short locked code list (Vehicle Maintenance Reporting Standards (VMRS) or home-grown). Catch-all codes are used rarely, not as the default.	☐	☐	☐	
11	Shop labor time lands on the work order (by person or by craft).	☐	☐	☐	
12	Part cost rides the work order, not only the counter ticket.	☐	☐	☐	
13	Outside / vendor repair invoices are linked back to the asset and the work order.	☐	☐	☐	

4. Preventive maintenance

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
14	Every active asset has a PM schedule that matches how it is used (meter, calendar, or both).	☐	☐	☐	
15	Completed PMs are recorded against the asset with date and meter.	☐	☐	☐	
16	You can pull PM compliance for a period without rebuilding it by hand (due, done, overdue, waived).	☐	☐	☐	

5. Fuel

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
17	Every fuel fill points to an asset (or a plate that resolves to one asset).	☐	☐	☐	
18	Fuel fills usually include an odometer or hour reading at the pump.	☐	☐	☐	
19	You can spot asset / meter mismatches between fuel and the maintenance system without a week of cleanup.	☐	☐	☐	

6. Downtime and availability

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
20	When an asset is down, someone records when it went down and when it returned to service.	☐	☐	☐	
21	Downtime reason is coded consistently enough to answer "why were we short on [class] last quarter?"	☐	☐	☐	

7. Telematics (if you use it)

Skip this section only if you have no telematics. If you skip it, do not count these lines in the total.

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
22	Each telematics box has one asset on the official list; orphans and doubles are tracked and cleaned the same week.	☐	☐	☐	
23	You can join telematics use (miles / hours / idle) to the same asset the shop uses for work orders and fuel.	☐	☐	☐	
24	Someone owns the join: when an asset is sold, swapped or renumbered, the telematics mapping gets updated the same week.	☐	☐	☐	

How staff may use telematics AI scores, cameras and coaching features is covered in the Fleet AI Use Policy Template, not here.

8. Ownership, export, retention and who owns quality

#	Check	Yes	Partial	No	Notes
25	Vendor contracts for your fleet maintenance software, telematics and fuel systems say the agency owns its data and can export it in a usable format.	☐	☐	☐	
26	You have actually tested an export recently (not just believed the sales deck).	☐	☐	☐	
27	Retention for work orders, fuel, meters and telematics history matches your records schedule, and you know who answers a public-records request for each.	☐	☐	☐	
28	One named role is accountable for record quality and has scheduled time to clean gaps, not only to run reports.	☐	☐	☐	

AI-tool contract terms (no training on your data, prompt retention, breach notice, and the rest) belong in the Fleet AI Use Policy Template, Section 9. Use that list when you buy or turn on an AI feature. Items 25-27 here are about the systems that already hold your fleet history.

Scoring guide

Count the **Yes** marks only.

If you use telematics (28 items)	No telematics (25 items)	What it means
23-28 Yes	20-25 Yes	**Lean on it.** Keep cleaning Partials. You can start careful AI use under your Fleet AI Use Policy.
14-22 Yes	12-19 Yes	**Still patchy.** AI will amplify the soft spots. Fix the Top 5 below before you trust summaries for budget or council.
0-13 Yes	0-11 Yes	**Park the AI.** Do not feed this into AI for decisions. Get the register, meters, work orders and PMs honest.

Partials are your punch list, not a participation trophy. Two Partials on meters and codes will still wreck a "cost per mile" answer.

Fix these first (Top 5)

If you only have time for five fixes before anyone turns on an AI feature against your fleet data, do these in order:

1. **One official asset list** with one asset number per asset and matching VINs / serials. Kill the shadow spreadsheets.
2. **Meter quality.** Stop reverse and stuck readings. No AI cost-per-mile math until meters are trustworthy.
3. **Work order coding.** Short locked code list (VMRS or home-grown). Catch-all codes used rarely.
4. **Labor and parts on the work order.** If labor time and part cost do not ride the work order, AI cannot rank assets or trades fairly.
5. **PM schedule and compliance you can pull.** If compliance is a side project every quarter, AI "overdue" lists will lie.

Everything else on this list matters. Those five are the floor.

Quick self-test (optional)

Pick three questions. Can your system of record answer each in under 15 minutes, with a source you would hand a council member?

1. What did Asset 1042 cost us in parts and labor in the last 12 months, and what failed?
2. Which active assets are overdue for PM right now, by how much (miles / hours / days)?
3. Which assets burned the most fuel last quarter relative to the miles or hours we recorded?

If any answer needs three exports and a prayer, mark the related checklist lines No or Partial and fix those first.

Closing

Bad data plus AI is just a faster way to be confidently wrong. Clean records are not exciting. They are what lets any tool (a spreadsheet, a report or AI) tell you something you can stand behind.

When you are ready for rules on *how* staff may use AI (approved tools, what not to paste, human sign-off, telematics scores), use the **Fleet AI Use Policy Template** from Civic Fleet Services alongside this checklist.

Want to get notified when the Civic Fleet Services FMIS is available? Ask at civicfleets.com.

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