Open City Network

A cities-first approach to smart city innovation

Briefing for Member Candidates
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Technology has collided with democracy in Canada. Nowhere is the opportunity and risk more prevalent than in municipalities, as advancements in technology outpace our ability to create strong policy and governance around it. Large multinationals are also entering cities with bold aspirations to take over smart city initiatives. Without strong regulatory frameworks in place that protect resident interests, cities run the risk of ceding control of city infrastructure—and the data it generates—to the private sector. Cities are entering an intense period of modernization. Our collective democratic, social and economic wellbeing depends on Canada's local public institutions becoming stronger, not weaker, through this change. We need regulation and standards that embed the public interest into the digital architecture underpinning smart city innovation.

What is a Cities-First Approach?
The Open City Network's cities-first approach to smart city innovation:
- Elected officials are empowered to determine the shape and governance of their smart city initiatives based on resident needs;
- Cities are the primary beneficiaries of the data they generate;
- Cities can choose any technology without being locked-in to a single vendor;
- Cities receive more resources and political support to drive digital transformation.

Our work

We're a not-for-profit serving as the connective tissue in the Canadian smart city landscape. The Open City Network brings together voices from the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors to create practical advancements in policy, governance and technology standards that put cities first. These include:

- Enabling digital standardization within and between cities;
- Ensuring open architecture is our technological foundation;
- Keeping the value of new public data in public hands; and
- Unlocking political, financial and program support for the digital and cultural transformation of our cities.

Who we are

The Executive Director of the Open City Network is Andy Best. You can reach him at abest@theopencity.org.

The founding members of the OCN Board of Directors are four Canadian technology companies: Miovision, ESRI, Geotab and Mappedin. **We currently have three board seats open for leading edge public sector organizations or NGOs**. If that's you, and you want a leading role in shaping Canada's smart city regulatory and technology framework, we encourage you to reach out.

Membership

We operate on an annual membership model that is open to the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Our fees are tiered according to sector and size, with a bias towards ease of access for the public and NFP sectors. Elected officials or other members of civil society are also welcome to join or support our work. Please reach out for more information.

Read More on the OCN

Find more at our website or in the Globe and Mail, The Logic and Betakit.