



TO: City Manager's Office Executive Team

FROM: Kerry O'Connor, Chief Innovation Officer
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SUBJECT: Updates and planned actions for Smart City Strategic Roadmap

We would like to follow up with you from our [May 18 Executive Team](#) meeting where the Innovation Office and Communications and Technology Management (CTM) last briefed you on our smart city strategy. We discussed how our efforts would connect with the strategic planning efforts then underway. Now that the Strategic Direction has been set, the Innovation Office and CTM have been working to align Austin's vision of an equitable and inclusive smart city with the goals and outcomes prioritized by city Council and Management.

Status: Our current smart city strategy efforts focus on leveling-up in our maturity model and building our capability to use emerging technologies in equitable and sustainable ways.

Next steps: To build towards Austin's smart city future, we plan to focus upcoming actions on:

- Market research for emerging technology and industry trends;
- The intersection of technology and equity; and
- The creation of shared legal, contracting, and policy guidance for accessing these technologies.

We will also undertake a communication strategy for Austin's smart city initiatives. Attachment A has more detail on planned next steps.

Success in these next steps will require close collaboration with other City departments, many of whom have their own technology and project roadmaps. We have a strong foundation for coordinating via the Open and Smart Advisory Committee and the smart city leadership provided by Assistant City Managers Rey Arellano and Mark Washington. As we put more detail to these next steps, we may request help gathering information from departments, convening colleagues for input, and leveraging staff expertise and resources.

ATTACHMENT A: Status of Austin's Smart City Strategic Roadmap and planned next steps

Per [Council Resolution No. 20161103-051](#), the Innovation Office and CTM in 2017 delivered a vision and definition of Austin as a smart city that focuses on solving big civic challenges, while emphasizing the use technology in equitable, inclusive, and accessible ways. Attachment C has more background, but in short, we have observed two overarching gaps to achieving our vision:

- **Raising the City's maturity level in technology:** City departments are at various points in adopting "smart" technologies for automation, analysis, and prediction. CTM has undertaken efforts to modernize manual and paper-based City services. Success in moving the City's technology usage forward requires not just data and technology, but also cross-sectoral collaboration, leadership, and public engagement.
- **Using technology in equitable and sustainable ways:** While emerging technologies can make City services more efficient, they can also increase inequalities, create unintended consequences, and pose security risks. Achieving our vision of a smart city requires that all Austin communities share in the benefits of technology and connectivity.

Planned next steps to close gaps toward Austin's smart city vision

The Innovation Office and CTM efforts for the remainder of FY 2018 into FY 2019 will require close collaboration and integration of City departments technology and project roadmaps.

1. Flesh out the Smart City Strategic Roadmap with action steps for achieving Austin's smart city vision. The Innovation Office and CTM will work with City departments and community stakeholders to outline focus areas and actions in service of Austin's vision. The roadmap will include actions to address the following identified needs:

- **Informing City staff with market research on emerging technology issues and trends.** Goal: Departments are better positioned to adopt emerging tools and partner with a wider pool of qualified vendors.
- **Exploring ways the City can ensure equitable use and benefit of smart city technology.** Goal: Vet the equity impacts of technology applications and infrastructure. (Potential Open Government Partnership commitment to co-create with community stakeholders.)
- **Creating shared resources with legal, policy, and contracting guidance for technology projects.** Goals: Streamlined, consistent processes for pilots, collaborations, and contracts for smart city projects; Better experience for partners externally.

2. Create communication strategy and branding for Austin's smart city initiative. The Innovation Office and CTM will work with department partners to develop a brand and digital presence for the City's smart city efforts. Communication activities will aim to make stakeholders aware of Austin's approach to equity in the smart city and foster engagement with Austin's smart city projects.

ATTACHMENT B: Recent and ongoing efforts in support of the smart city vision

Citywide efforts led by CTM and the Innovation Office to grow technology maturity:

Activity	Timeframe
Coordination among City departments: The Innovation Office and CTM facilitate the Open and Smart Advisory Committee, which convenes and shares knowledge on smart city efforts across departments. Committee-sponsored working groups began work in 2018 to explore organizational issues in technology: legal and policy guidance, ensuring equitable outcomes, educating on new tools and trends, and sharing information on City projects. Departments are currently updating a public inventory of smart city projects (update due August 2018).	Ongoing
Engagement with technology partners: The Innovation Office and CTM co-sponsored two workshops in summer 2018 that convened City staff and technology experts to discuss City goals and brainstorm potential projects and solutions. City executives and Council members also advised on the Capital Factory's Smart City Challenge in July, which connected startups with civic priorities and selected viable companies for private funding.	Ongoing
Paperless Initiative/Paper Census: CTM's Office of Design and Delivery , with Austin Tech Alliance, is working to identify inefficient, resident-facing paper-based processes, and research, design, and deliver alternative digital prototypes. This project's initial discovery focused on improving residential parking permits, coordination and collaboration of senior services with Emergency Medical Services and supporting partners, and improving communications with our residents and the Office of the Police Monitor.	Ongoing
Austin.gov: CTM's Office of Design & Delivery is rebuilding the City of Austin's website to improve resident access to our services, and establishing a flexible technology stack and modern design and development team so we can grow and adapt with residents' needs. An alpha release of the new site can be found at alpha.austin.gov .	Ongoing

Activity	Timeframe
<p>Mayors Blockchain Challenge: With a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies, the City of Austin is creating a blockchain-enabled platform that stores, secures, validates, and automatically packages personal documents, allowing residents to access social and health services especially vital to ending homelessness. City staff, service providers, and startups convened for a hackathon in July to prototype solutions ahead of an application to pursue additional grant funding. Vision: https://www.mypassaustin.com/</p>	<p>Grant-funded discovery stage: Mar - Aug 2018</p> <p>Application submitted Aug 20</p> <p>Award announced October</p>
<p>Bloomberg iTeam: With the capability of the innovation team (iTeam), funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Innovation Office provides a capability for research, design, and testing of new solutions within complex smart city challenges. With an initial focus on homelessness, the iTeam's second year will focus on homelessness prevention, beginning in September 2018.</p>	<p>Phase 1: FY 2018</p> <p>Phase 2: FY 2019</p> <p>Grant lasts through Dec 2019</p>
<p>Open Government Partnership commitments: As part of our participation in the international Open Government Partnership, the City of Austin co-creates commitments – with the Austin community – to promote transparency, community engagement, accountability, and technology innovation. The Innovation Office facilitates the co-creation and execution of commitments with departments and community stakeholders. Potential commitment topics for 2018-2020 include: prevention of homelessness, equitable use of technology, community climate resilience, and neighborhood stability and affordability.</p>	<p>Submittal of co-created commitments for the next two years: Oct 2018</p> <p>Implementation of commitments: 2018-2020</p>

ATTACHMENT C: Background on Austin’s vision of an equitable, inclusive smart city

In November 2016, Austin City Council passed a [resolution](#) calling for the development of a Smart City Strategic Roadmap with relevant City entities, community partners, and the technology community. The City Manager designated the Innovation Office and CTM to lead development of the roadmap.

Concurrently, the City of Austin developed its first [strategic framework](#) in more than a decade. This framework outlines the most pressing challenges facing Austin over the next five years, and we plan to use these challenges to frame and prioritize smart city projects.

The technology industry and many cities view the “smart city” as one that uses connected technology to automate decision making and make services more efficient. Austin’s definition of a smart city comes from the [International Standards Organization definition of a smart city](#), which recognizes the role of people and collaboration in leveraging technology. The Innovation Office and CTM recommended this definition to City Council in [June 2017](#).

We are a city that becomes increasingly efficient in solving real problems for real people by:

- 1. engaging stakeholders and users;*
- 2. leading collaboratively;*
- 3. working across disciplines, departments, and city systems; and*
- 4. using data and integrated technologies to transform services and improve quality of life with and for all Austinites, businesses, and visitors.*

Three key components set Austin's strategy apart from that of other cities. Our vision:

1. Complements Austin’s [open government commitments](#) to civic participation, transparency, accountability, and use of technology and innovation methods.
2. Incorporates Austin’s values of inclusion, accessibility, and equity – each of which are reflected in the City of Austin’s strategic direction.
3. Grounds Austin’s smart city efforts in the need to solve priority problems that impact people in this city, not just follow the hype cycle of technology. This definition recognizes that we cannot truly take advantage of the benefits of automation and technology without effective community engagement, leadership, and collaboration across sectors.

The Innovation Office and CTM provided an update on Smart City Strategic Roadmap progress to Council in [November 2017](#).

