

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM3.2	ACTION			Ward: All
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Data Governance and Smart Cities - by Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Chief Information Officer and the City Clerk, in consultation with appropriate City staff, to develop a City-wide policy framework and governance model associated with digital infrastructure, such as smart cities, and a work plan for implementation according to the following City of Toronto policy principles:

- a. privacy, transparency, and accountability;
- b. public ownership and protecting the public interest; and
- c. equity and human rights.

2. City Council direct the City Manager, in collaboration with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, the Chief Information Officer and the City Clerk, and in consultation with appropriate City staff, to conduct a City-wide public consultation process on the data governance principles and proposed model to inform the implementation of the plan to be applied to Quayside and other smart city developments; the consultations would include a jurisdictional review of others cities' work and leading institutions and organizations in this space.

Summary

As technology advances, the collection of personal data is becoming commonplace in everyday life. Smart Cities – urban areas that use technology and data collection in order to manage resources, infrastructure, and day-to-day operations – are just one example of the increasing interconnectedness of technological advancement and cities.

There are many ways that the City of Toronto already collects data from residents and in the public realm. For example, we pay our Toronto Transit Commission fares with a smart card, we

register for recreation programs online and cameras across Toronto monitor traffic flow and congestion. Locally and around the world, new ways of collecting and analyzing data interwoven with digital urban infrastructure are being proposed to take advantage of technological advances. The Quayside proposal on our waterfront is the best known example of this kind of thinking in Toronto today.

Increasingly, data from a myriad of services (apps, websites, tracking data from smartphones, and phone carriers) is being collected and re-sold, sometimes without the knowledge of the public. There is a risk that through collection of data, personal identification of individuals, tracking of behaviours, combining of unrelated datasets from multiple sources, and the application of algorithms in decision-making processes, that the lives of Toronto's citizens could be negatively impacted, often without their knowledge or ability to consent or opt-out. It is increasingly recognized that there are important discussions that must take place about how data is collected, managed, and monitored to ensure the public good is protected and advanced.

Large-scale city-building projects and day-to-day neighbourhood planning processes are governed by principles and goals that ensure we meet the outcomes we seek, and that we protect those who are at risk and avoid negative consequences. To date, those essential frameworks have yet to be defined for Toronto's civic data, and we must ask ourselves what we want from a smart city and from digital infrastructure. When and how should we permit data collection, and what is needed for that data to be managed and used for the public good.

In addition to asking ourselves these critical questions, as is standard City practice we must set out a framework for moving forward. As a City, we champion principles that inform all of our work - privacy, accountability and transparency in our Open Data Master Plan, the interests of the public in planning our City and our spaces, equity and human rights in our corporate equity goals and priorities on disaggregated data collection, and more.

We champion these principles in our physical spaces. Now, we must ensure we champion them in our technological spaces.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM3.2