# Grant Outcomes Report: Civic Innovation Office

Serving the people of Toronto through new tools, ideas, and technology

09.17    12.19

**TORONTO**

Most residents are simply spectators, passively witnessing local politics through headlines and soundbites. How can we break this fourth wall and create a culture of local citizen engagement? How can we open the doors to meaningful dialogue and participation, allowing us to collectively build the city we want to live in?

Dave Meslin, The Fourth Wall

## Table of Contents

# A message from Paula Kwan, Director

I am delighted to deliver this report to all of you. This report represents the dedication, perseverance, and commitment the Civic Innovation Office has had to deliver positive outcomes to the public, to the City of Toronto, and on our commitment to our grantors, Bloomberg Philanthropies.

To achieve each of the stories of impact that you'll read, we embarked on a journey in 2017, with a clear goal: to rethink complex issues and reimagine outcomes that will improve the lives of residents of Toronto. You will read about 7 different initiatives, ranging from procurement innovation, digital translation tools, human-centered design training, through to creative partnerships to achieve the work together.

What you won't see in these pages are shiny solutions without first understanding the problem we were trying to solve. We learned first-hand how the meaning of innovation is less about feeling modern or agile, how many Post-its we used, or how well we performed during a presentation. Improving government services with a new approach is hard...**but it is possible**.

Government innovation is more about people and rewiring processes, not jumping to products or solutions first. It's about navigating the complexities of a system designed to serve the fourth-largest city in North America, adapting our tools and approach along the way, working quickly and collaboratively, testing for repeatable effects across neighbourhoods or services, and always searching for no-cost and low-cost ideas.

This path has definitely been an interesting journey, and one we couldn't have completed without the help of this team, City staff, City leadership, civic innovators working in other levels of government and cities, service providers, community leaders, the local design community, volunteers, interns, and entrepreneurs. **Thank you**. You each proved that this work is important in our city, and we are thankful for your time and expertise.

Lastly, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of each and every member of the public whom we crossed paths with. From taking the time to learn more about our work and sharing your thoughts at our weekly

office hours, public events, and pop-up sessions in libraries across the city, to simply tapping on the glass of our office, we are truly grateful for your time. Your voices were heard and critical to our success.

My hope is that this report speaks to the culture change we knew would be the most challenging part of the job, but would yield the highest return. We only just got started and we're confident that, with your support, the City will continue to move forward and modernize one step at a time.

*Paula Kwan.*

—Paula Kwan
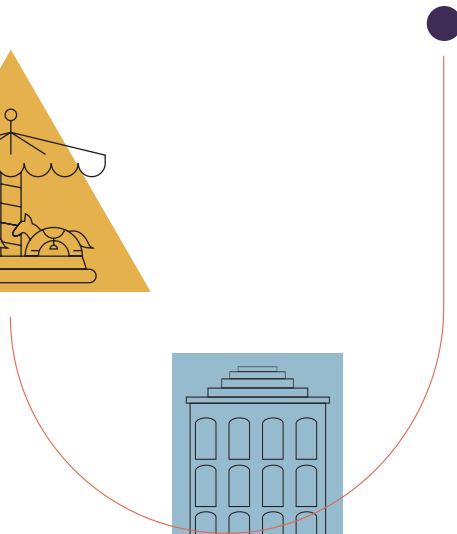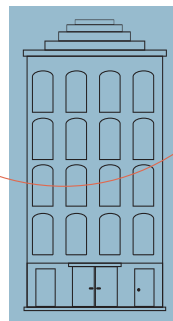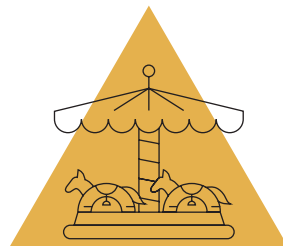
How the Civic Innovation Office works with City staff, local organizations, and residents of Toronto to approach complex problems with a fresh set of eyes.
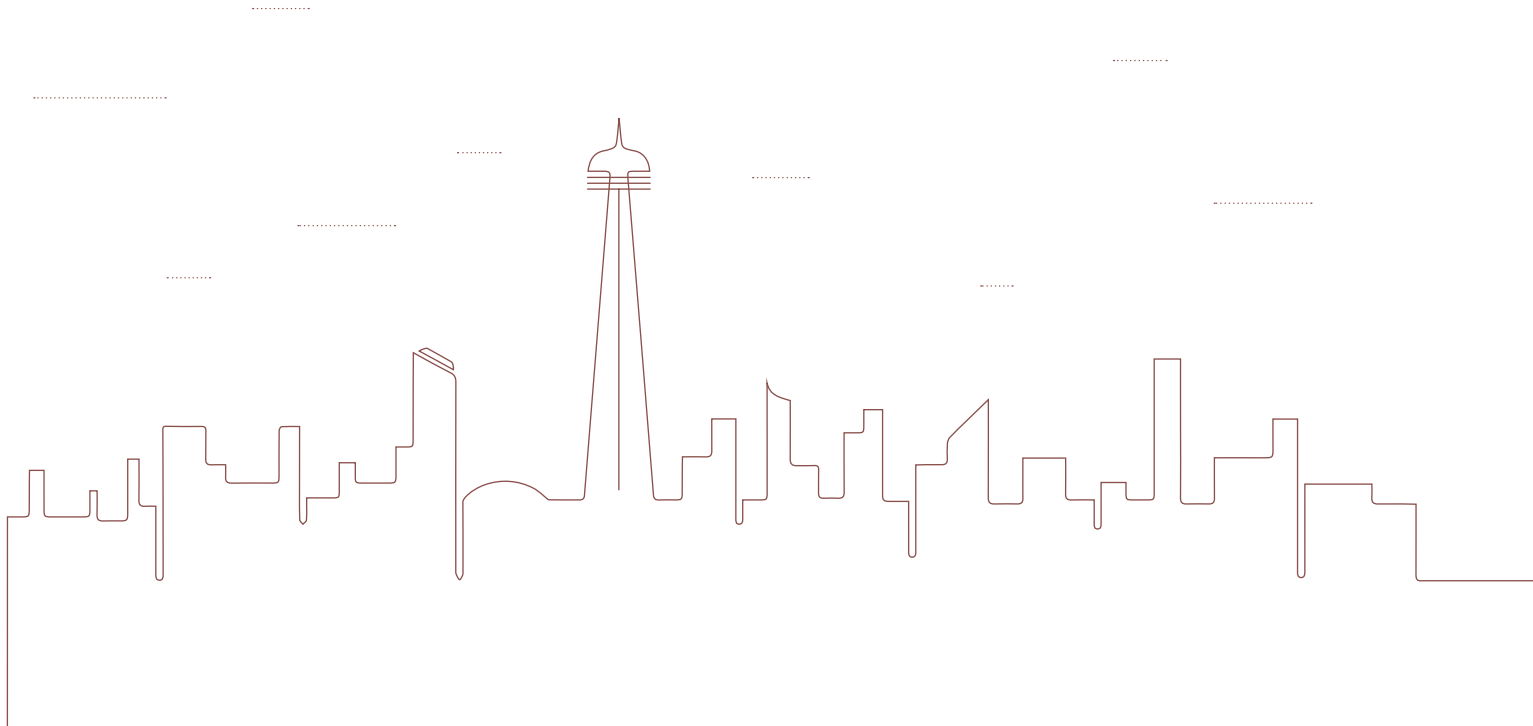
① Invitation to Partner (ITP)
— *Inviting local innovators to co-create City solutions*

② Blockchain Training
— *Delivering fast, efficient, and secure services to residents*

③ Human-Centered Design Training
—*Putting empathy for residents at the core of problem-solving*

④ Elevate Social Impact
— *Sharing our platform with Toronto's unsung heroes*

⑤ Creative Alliances
— *Finding talent just outside our door*

⑥ Service Blueprinting
— *Turning the resident's journey into action*

⑦ Digital Translation Tools
— *Sending clearer signals to make a City Hall for all*

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Invitation to Partner (ITP)

# —Inviting local innovators to co-create City solutions

Toronto's 311 system responds to more than 1.5 million calls annually, and was searching for new tools to more effectively manage and learn from the data. The Civic Innovation Office and Purchasing & Materials Management (PMMD) knew that the Request for Proposal (RFP) process presents challenges for non-traditional local vendors, so they piloted a new procurement model that makes it easier for them to apply.

**WHAT IS MIX?**

MIX is led by the City of Guelph, in partnership with the City of London, City of Barrie, and the MaRS Discovery District. The cities run innovation procurement challenges and MIX shares best practices with the municipal sector.

### Open the Doors to Experimentation

The goal of the ITP was to reach out to Toronto's tech and startup community to create a solution for 311 using a design-thinking approach. We knew that there was an additional barrier to attract the right partners due to negative perceptions and experiences for small- and mid-sized businesses when bidding through the traditional Request for Proposal (RFP). The rigid process, long and detailed documentation, and a 'waterfall' approach were detractors for a project where the challenge was clear but the solution was not.

### Embrace a New Model

City staff from the Civic Innovation Office and PMMD co-created the City's first Invitation to Partner (ITP). Within weeks, the joint team publicly launched the ITP, which encouraged potential partners to submit a proposal outlining how they would work with Toronto residents and City staff to design, build, and prototype a more responsive 311 model in 12-16 weeks. Preceding work by the Municipal Innovation Exchange (MIX) and STiR program by City Innovates contributed to the ITP model.

### Attract Innovative Solutions

The ITP was met with excitement from small- and mid-sized companies across Toronto. It stepped outside of the status quo — while meeting provincial guidelines — and put out a call-to-action asking a wide range of businesses and entrepreneurs what they thought the solution might be. It resulted in applications from a range of businesses and teams of individuals, many of which had never responded to a City RFP before. They presented creative solutions that were completely different from what PPMD had seen before.



We learned that entrepreneurs are looking for better ways to work with the City. The result was the ITP, an experiment in finding new ideas and partners.



An image of the City's first Invitation to Partner (ITP), which started with a welcome letter to create a feeling of partnership and collaboration.



The project kick-off meeting hosted at TWG with the 311 team and Civic Innovation Office.

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The ITP will be a great addition to the toolbox and will fit in well as PMMD goes through its overall business transformation.

**Mike Pacholok**, Chief Purchasing Officer, City of Toronto

For us, the ITP has been a valuable ongoing experience for both partners and it puts leading-edge problem-solving methodologies to use in practice on the most important civic challenges of our time.

**TWG (The Working Group),** the selected vendor for the City's first ITP

## CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ITP

· Concise and challenge-based
· Uses common language
· Outlines the evaluation criteria with transparency
· Promotes creativity in the responses
· Provides an opportunity to work with City staff and residents to co-create a solution
· Emphasizes user research, putting residents at the heart of the process

## WHEN TO USE AN ITP INSTEAD OF AN RFP

· Smaller scale projects with a budget under $50,000 CAD
· Projects where the problem is clearly defined but the solution is unknown
· Divisions who are able to commit the resources to properly execute the ITP document, evaluation process and design process in a meaningful way

SPECIAL THANKS TO

**TWG**  THE WORKING GROUP

Blockchain Training

# —Delivering fast, efficient, and secure services to residents

The City has been following the development of blockchain and participating in proof-of-concepts since 2017, beginning with a project initiated by the Province of Ontario involving restaurant licenses. Recognizing the potential for blockchain's increased speed, security, and transparency, the Civic Innovation Office sought to equip City employees with additional training.

### WHAT IS BLOCKCHAIN?

Blockchain is a decentralized computer network that shares and updates a digital history of transactions. No one organization owns or controls it, which creates an efficient, cost-effective, politically neutral, and transparent network.

The individual records are recreated, not copied, leaving only one true record on the network. This one true record further reinforces a transparent and trusted transaction between parties because the records on the network cannot be updated or modified.

### WHAT IS ETHEREUM?

Launched in 2015, Ethereum is an open-source, globally recognized blockchain operating system. Ethereum is programmable, which allows developers to solve problems by creating their own original applications often designed as smart (digital) contracts, to enable concepts such as digital identification, asset verification and tracking, to centralized healthcare management.
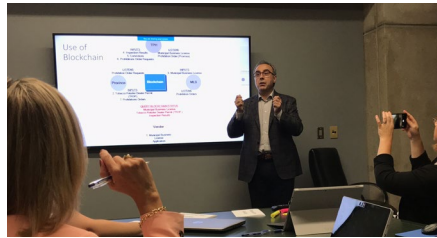
### Finding the Spark for Training

Based on demand from City staff, the Civic Innovation Office co-hosted a series of Lunch & Learns with the City's Innovation Lab with more than 300 people attending the first event. The Blockchain Learning Group (BLG), a Toronto-based organization, helped in delivering the context and technical details to the attendees. The Information & Technology Division worked with BLG to run the City's first blockchain acceleration program. City software engineers took intensive hands-on training sessions on Ethereum, learning how to use it for City initiatives.

### Hacking Blockchain Solutions

The training sessions were followed by a 3-day hackathon where more than 20 City staff formed teams to build their own decentralized application using Ethereum, and demonstrated its potential in the context of our local government. The two winning concepts came from a joint Municipal Licensing & Standards (MLS) and Toronto Public Health (TPH) team, and an Office of the Lobbyist Registrar team. The Civic Innovation Office showcased the program outcomes at Elevate 2018 to much enthusiasm.

### Build Blocks for the Future

The impact of the blockchain training continues beyond the hackathon. The City is still engaged with learning and awareness of this technology, and has been digitizing processes to prepare for future adoption of blockchain applications. It has the potential to be instrumental in achieving the City's strategic mandates in multiple ways, including allowing tens of thousands of businesses to interact digitally and seamlessly across multiple regulatory agencies and governments rather than managing these types of transactions manually one by one.



A team picture of the City's first cohort of hackathon participants.



Each team demonstrated their proof-of-concept applications and shared lessons learned with the audience.



The key to future opportunities is to facilitate sessions that identify projects aligned with the City's strategic priorities while focusing on continuous learning.

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We were excited to see how developers in the City went from being curious about the platform to creating their own concepts they could demonstrate. The City is now armed with the tools and knowledge to move forward in developing its blockchain roadmap.

**Chami Akmeemana,** CEO, Blockchain Learning Group

· *Licensing and Inspecting Tobacco Resellers*
Streamlining the process for potential licensees by creating one portal that supports a multi-level government system that consolidates, regulates, and administers the business information using an Ethereum blockchain application.
· *Lobbyist Registrar*
Refining the transparency of record-keeping for persons who lobby public office holders, making is easier for lobbyists to register and file updates on an Ethereum blockchain application.

The hackathon proof-of-concepts helped the City to identify ways to replace information silos that exist across different organizations, allowing data to be centralized and shared in real time. Hackathon teams also contemplated making that information visible to the public for increased transparency.

Blockchain discussions have continued with teams in the organization. With its fundamental elements of security, efficiency, and transparency, the technology provides a great foundation to support government digitalization and customer service priorities. Like many other cities, we don't know if blockchain is the solution, but Toronto has learned that the potential certainly exists.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

**BLOCKCHAIN**
LEARNING GROUP INC.

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Human-Centered Design Training

# —Putting empathy for residents at the core of problem-solving

After the Community Development Unit (CDU) was introduced to human-centered design from the Civic Innovation Office, they became interested in trying it with the resident feedback they were receiving in order to create and improve community solutions. While they often heard from residents and engaged with them regularly, human-centered design could teach them a new approach to turn that input into action.

**CIVIC INNOVATION ADVISORY SERVICES**

The Civic Innovation Office has open office hours on Friday from 1-3 p.m. As part of our mandate to encourage and facilitate innovation inside and outside City Hall, we roll up our sleeves and get down to work with City staff who seek our advice.

We've been coaching staff on service design and research, and we're starting to see the results of their projects. In one case, we introduced a colleague to user research, teaching them to start with resident needs and design using data. After we supported them for a few months, they ran a user research project with an outside firm and shared what they learned with us.

### Customizing a World-Class Program to the City

The Civic Innovation team customized a 9-week introductory course on design thinking developed by IDEO, an internationally recognized design and consulting firm founded in Palo Alto, California, into four workshops to suit the availability of the CDU. We hosted and facilitated the workshops, and ran them every other week in our office space. These workshops introduced the team of ten Community Development Officers (CDO) to a strong foundation of human-centered design, which refined the collaborative and empathetic approach they had been using to support the people they were activating.

### Arming Staff with Hands-on Workshops

The goal of these workshops was to introduce the Community Development Officers to new methods of collaboration with residents. This was a great fit for the team, as they work closely with residents and community partners to action the City's Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020. With the use of human-centered design, staff are better able to facilitate small group discussions, role-playing exercises, rapid ideation, and written statements to address their challenges. Each person received a design kit filled with the tools they could immediately use in their work.

### Use Training to Help Communities

One participant was Rosemary Bell, who supports the Black Creek and Glenfield Jane Heights neighborhoods (Jane and Finch). Human-centered design helped her organize and process resident feedback on mental health. Residents were engaged to brainstorm solutions and test concepts. This strengthened her toolkit and helped turn ideas into action in a rapid, low-cost, and low-fidelity way. She brought in Mental Health First Aid, an accredited program that provides 14 hours of mental health training. More than 100 residents were trained, and the local program has continued to grow.

A small team gathers around a whiteboard of ideas generated during the workshop to uncover notable themes and patterns.



Our design kits included materials such as worksheets, instructional aides, Post-its and Sharpies so that the CDOs could immediately start running their own workshops.



Rosemary Bell kickstarting a working session with residents of Black Creek and Glenfield Jane Heights.

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We've been interested in learning how the Civic Innovation Office uses human-centered design to engage residents in innovative ways. It will be useful for local planning table processes, particularly in identifying challenges and building the awareness of the benefits of collaboration. I believe all City staff that work in communities and with residents should be trained in human-centered design.

**John Smith,** Manager, Community Development Unit, City of Toronto

## WORKSHOP MODULES

1. Discovery: Identifying the challenges
2. Synthesis: Researching the challenges and gathering findings
3. Ideation: Using findings to brainstorm possible solutions
4. Prototyping: Picking a solution and creating plans for it

## BY THE NUMBERS

▶ **10**
Community Development Officer participants who work across 31 Neighbourhood Improvement Areas

▶ **15**
Hours of in-class workshops across 4 program modules

▶ **50**
Net promoter score of the course

## WHAT'S NEXT

We've been working closely with the City's Corporate Learning and Leadership Development team to share what we learned from this training experiment, and to evaluate options on scaling the benefits to the rest of the organization.

We've continued to hear from the CDOs on how their public engagements are going, and we've even co-hosted workshops with them in a supporting role.

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# —Sharing our platform with Toronto's unsung heroes

When we launched the Civic Innovation Office on the main stage at Elevate 2017, we saw how a platform at this scale gave the City a stronger voice in the startup community. As we connected with civic innovators both inside and outside City Hall, we realized our platform needed to be shared to celebrate their stories of social impact. Partnering with Elevate, we produced our own track for their 2018 festival, one that focused on people who are making a difference for Toronto with their ideas, businesses, products, and services.
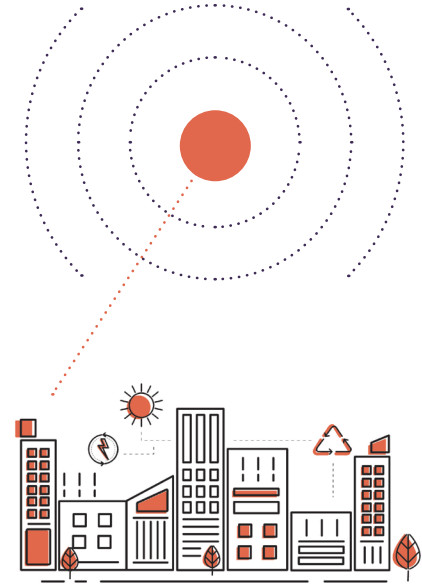
**ELEVATE** SOCIAL IMPACT

## Getting Inspired by Local Innovators

Since the public launch of the Civic Innovation Office, we have been proud to make the time to meet more than 200 local businesses and entrepreneurs who are actively building features, teams, or companies focused on making a positive social impact, often over revenue. Inspired by this community, it was clear to us that their stories needed to be heard beyond our team and celebrated in our own track at Elevate 2018.



Glance Marketing
@glancemarketing

So exciting! The Toronto Civic Innovation Office just launched as part of #ElevateToronto .

2017-09-12, 4:03 PM

The City's participation in Elevate demonstrates its commitment to partnering with local businesses to solve complex challenges.

## Creating an Accessible Event

Every detail of the event was viewed through a lens of equality, accessibility, and inclusivity. We selected the Regent Park Catering Collective and Newcomer Kitchen as our food partners, and Lemon & Allspice Common Ground Co-operative for snacks. We highlighted 26 stories of positive social impact, from government innovation to indigenous entrepreneurship to the redesign of public spaces. It was the only free and fully accessible event at Elevate 2018, and the only track that was live-streamed with viewers from at least five other countries.



Elevate is one of Toronto's largest tech and innovation festivals, attracting almost 5,000 people for their annual events.

## Amplifying Stories of Innovation in the City

Elevate Social Impact became an exciting and inspiring day of specially curated programming, designed to inform and inspire our audience in their ability to create similar experiences. We were proud to broadcast innovative stories, ideas, and projects from the people making them happen. We helped bring their successes to light, and they helped inspire others to find ways to improve our city. Speakers benefitted by promoting their causes and making connections throughout the 3-day conference.



Hillary Hartley, Chief Digital Officer and Deputy Minister for Digital Government, and her son, Wyatt, moderating a panel of ambitious young founders.

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When the Civic Innovation Office gave me the opportunity to discuss our program on stage, it helped us not only attract new volunteers, but strengthen relationships with several notable organizations such as Twitter Canada and WorkHaus, as well as initiate ongoing conversations with other prominent groups.

**Takara Small**, Executive director, VentureKids
*Presenter at Elevate Social Impact*

| ELEVATE SOCIAL IMPACT: TOPIC PRESENTED | PRESENTING ORGANIZATION |
| --- | --- |
| Tech for Good | Ontario Digital Service |
| Fighting Poverty with Code and Entrepreneurship | Venture Kids Canada |
| Healthy Budget Builder Toronto: Create your own City of Toronto budget | Wellesley Institute |
| Putting the 'Us' in Usability: A new way to engage everyone in creating better technology | Code for Canada |
| Learning Blockchain, The Tale of One City | City of Toronto |
| Rapid Fire Project Showcase panel | Fix the 6ix, Upside Foundation, UX Research Toronto, CNIB Foundation, Toronto Gaymers |
| Intro to Innovation at the TPL | Toronto Public Library |
| Digital Literacy & Inclusion at Toronto Public Library: Making Sure No One Gets Left Behind | Toronto Public Library |
| City of Sport: CIMA Mayor's School Cricket | City of Toronto |
| Everyone is a Designer! | City of Toronto |
| Panel Discussion: Next Gen Explained | Founder of Smart Cane, co-founders of HotPopRobot, moderated by Hillary Hartley and her son, Wyatt Hartley |
| Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship | Pontiac Group |
| Play Finds a Way | Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities |
| How Social Innovation Creates Inclusive Cities | MaRS Discovery District |
| The Toronto I-Team Chronicles, Vol. 1, 2018 | City of Toronto |
| The Business Value of Accessibility | BEST Consulting |

SPECIAL THANKS TO
**ELEVATE**

# —Finding talent just outside our door

The Civic Innovation Office found enthusiastic partners in all corners of Toronto, including the User Experience Research Collective (UXRC), the City of Toronto's own Innovation Lab, and OCAD University. We had the pleasure of collaborating on solutions with people that want to make a difference, and it gave students and professionals the chance to gain first-hand experience with projects in the public sector.

## Connecting with Creative Professionals

We began by attending several of the local meetups and events, and heard how important it was to see the City represented. We shared our challenges in solving civic problems, looking to learn from diverse perspectives and strategies that would lead to a common goal. The resulting partnerships aren't one size fits all, but are customized to each organization, our shared values, and our areas of expertise.

## Taking Faster Action for Residents

Creative alliances are a win-win-win for the public, our partners, and the City. The public benefits from faster improvements, partners benefit from the opportunity to give back to their communities, and the City benefits from new ideas that might not have been considered before. The blend of external perspectives, along with the City's deep knowledge of people and processes, can help accelerate the positive social impact and tap into the world-class talent in our own backyard.

## Collaborating on City Solutions

Meeting UXRC at their first Strive conference in 2018 launched a creative partnership where they provided their research expertise to the City on projects such as our digital translation tools. Their presence expanded our office's training capacity and helped us broaden human-centered design practices within the City.

Additionally, we collaborated with OCAD University's Strategic Foresight program. A number of their Master's students led areas of our projects in a matter of weeks, which helped us deliver results faster.

We represented the City at Strive 2019, asking attendees for feedback on six projects that were displayed in the exhibition area.



Attendees at Strive learning more about City projects from staff. Their input would later be incorporated into the projects' research plans.
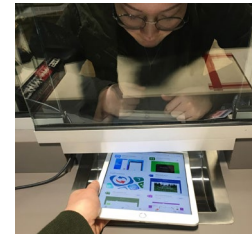


Researchers from UXRC performing live testing for the digital translation tool project at North York Civic Centre.

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It's really exciting to see how research is growing organically in the city both within the companies that are hiring researchers, but also how a solid research approach is becoming a more integral part of developing services at the City of Toronto.

**Alec Levin**, Co-founder, UX Research Collective

## HOW TO FORM A CREATIVE ALLIANCE

· Identify pre-existing agreements with organizations and their strengths
· Get to know civic innovators by attending local industry events
· Work with the Toronto Office of Partnerships on your official agreements
· Each alliance will be different, so be ready to improvise to form an agreement that suits you and your partner's needs

## PROJECTS THAT HAVE BENEFITTED FROM OUR CREATIVE ALLIANCES

· Researching language access for the digital translation tool project
· Rapidly building service blueprints for the Neighbour-hood Grants Program
· Developing and executing an inclusive research plan

Grant Outcomes Report

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

UXRC

OCAD UNIVERSITY
OC AD U

Service Blueprints
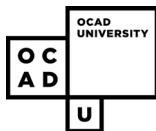
# —Turning the resident's journey into action

During an evaluation of the Neighbourhood Grants Program, the Civic Innovation Office and Social Development, Finance & Administration (SDFA) explored an opportunity to more clearly understand and improve the grantee's journey. The team created a service blueprint to make each of the program's moving parts visible to City staff, and to increase their understanding of the trickle-down effect of their design decisions.

**WHAT IS A SERVICE BLUEPRINT?**

Service blueprints are a tool to visually provide a high-level overview of all parts of the program. It exists as a living document that actively tracks the delivery of program elements.

Doing so allows all interactions from residents, City staff, and back office experiences to be visualized, which in turn leads to a greater understanding of how every interaction relates to one another and how they can each be optimized.

## Designing with Residents at the Centre

The service blueprint creation was quite simple, since City staff are naturally inclined to put themselves in the shoes of the residents. We interviewed grantees who had been through the Neighbourhood Grants Program to capture details of their experiences — the good and bad. Experiences were then grouped according to each phase of the program, creating a visualization of the "resident's journey" and letting everyone see the human interactions within the program. We began with information the City had, but laying it all out uncovered meaningful moments and patterns that had been previously missed.

## Visualizing Critical Moments of Delight and Improvement

Grantees shared candid thoughts about how the application process felt like a lot of upfront work for one event, and a lot of time spent waiting to hear back from the City. For positive moments, we saw their faces light up when they spoke about the email they received confirming that their application had been approved. Understanding the grantees' experiences in context and identifying common patterns of delight and improvement, SDFA took action by increasing communication with grantees during the review phase, and further celebrating that approval email and moment with them.

## Service Blueprints as a Means to an End

A service blueprint is an important tool, but it is not the end goal. Just like your favourite store, app, or car, it continues to improve. For the delivery of City services to evolve with changing times, the service blueprint needs to be continually reviewed and updated in order to identify new moments to improve on. It's best used as an accessible, visual tool that's posted where it will be referenced, reflected on, and improved by everyone's input, especially the public's. It gives teams a shared, holistic view of a complex process by putting small decisions in context and understanding the impact design choices have.



A program grantee visualizing her event. Drawing as an alternative communication method can help bridge many language barriers.



Our interns from OCAD updating a previous version of a service blueprint for the Neighbourhood Grants Program.



Grantees complete a workbook prototype, one of several initiatives that emerged from the service blueprint.

"

# The service blueprint is like a planning, evaluation, consultation tool rolled into one.

**Carolyn Doyle**, Agency Review Officer,
Community Funding Programs Unit, City of Toronto

**What**: One strategic area of improvement that the Civic Innovation Office identified using the service blueprint was how the Neighbourhood Grants Program didn't have a clear process to measure its long-term impact, yet we heard meaningful stories of how it positively impacted grantees during our original interviews with them.

**How**: We went back to grantees to better understand how they defined the program's "impact." We learned that they viewed it at both an individual level and at a community level, which was a new way to frame the program's effects.

**Results:** We created a new evaluation tool, in the form of a creative workbook called "My Story", which we then tested with a 20-person group of grantees. The workbook was designed to capture their stories of program impact with writing and drawing exercises, which would then be used to develop a metrics dashboard for City staff to articulate those stories. These tools will be used to evaluate and communicate the impact of the program and its long-term effects to City staff, City Council, and to people interested in applying to the program.

Digital Translation Tools
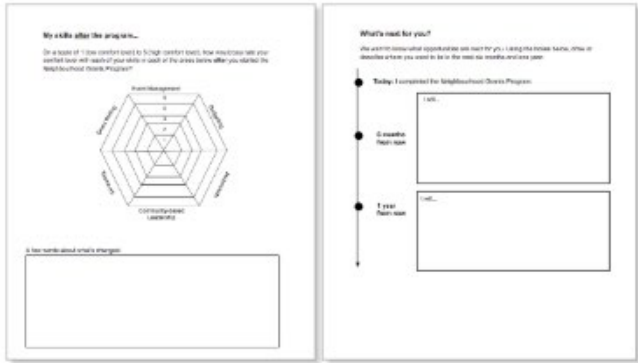
# —Sending clearer signals to make a City Hall for all

The Civic Innovation Office is located on the main floor of City Hall, and our bright space makes us very easy to see. This leads to many unplanned but welcome encounters with a diverse range of people. With these moments, we have learned that many people regularly face language barriers, which we turned into an opportunity to test digital translation tools to help guests more easily find their way.

## WHAT ARE DIGITAL TRANSLATION TOOLS?

We've been testing two different tools: Google Translate and Microsoft Translator. These apps are free to download and translate using voice, keyboard entry, or camera-based images.

It was important that we were not biased toward any one tool since accessibility, feasibility, and functionality were the priority.
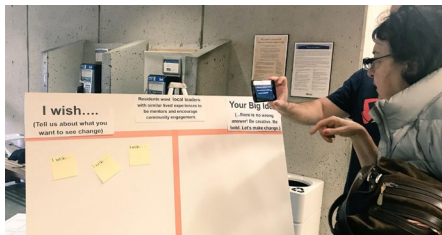
Microsoft Translator

Google Translate

## Unexpected Interactions as Research

The impact of language barriers is a well-known challenge for the City. We began testing two translation apps with residents who would make their way to our office asking for help, ranging from directions to the washroom or their councillor's office, to needing help reading City-issued material. Our tests included Google Translate and Microsoft Translator, in addition to the tools that the public had with them. We broadened the range of use cases from our office to other areas of City Hall and even to community events.

## Breaking down the Language Barrier

We heard similar stories from the Municipal Licensing & Standards and Revenue Services Divisions, which immediately led to starting our own field research. We worked with the User Experience Research Collective (UXRC), one of our creative partnerships, to run a 4-week research sprint to better understand the opportunities and barriers to using translation tools at service counters with high volumes of visitors and language access issues. Several key learnings from that research led us to Information Desks at City buildings.

## Supporting the Information Desk Transformation

The Information Desk at City Hall was being updated to reflect the City's new vision of Customer Experience. We were asked to help test its new features in addition to testing the translation tools further. We worked with Corporate Services and the 311 Division to rapidly build, test, and rebuild prototypes in a 6-week timeframe. Within two weeks of field tests, the prototypes were in regular use at the desk, which were positive results toward implementing the tools at more City centres on a larger scale.



Our team using a translation tool to enable participation in a public engagement. One features takes written text and translates it to the language of choice.



Post-its of several ideas generated by the public on universal signage for translation support that would later be refined and tested.



The counter signage tested from the Post-it activity brought this guest to the Information Desk where she was supported with Mandarin to English translations.

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This is a problem we didn't exactly go looking for—it found us at our office and in our public engagements. Once we helped two to three people with the tool and saw their reactions, we knew we were onto something big.

**Paula Kwan**, Director, Civic Innovation Office

▶ **250-400**
Number of interactions per day with the public at the Information Desk

▶ **1-5**
Number of interactions at the Information Desk per day requiring language support

▶ **~60**
Number of hours of observation at the Information Desk by the Civic Innovation team over 4 weeks

▶ **$0**
Tax dollars spent by the visitors or the City to use the translation apps

LIST OF LANGUAGE TESTED

- French
- Cantonese
- Mandarin
- Japanese
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- Amharic
- Russian
- Vietnamese
- Bangla
- Kiswahili
- Tamil
- Korean
- Urdu

LANGUAGES ENCOUNTERED AND NOT SUPPORTED BY THE APP AT THE TIME

- Tibetan

"

One guest of the desk described how he had been searching for an answer at several government offices for six months and he was turned away at at least five locations. We held this conversation between Amharic and English using one of the translation tools. He showed us a stack of business cards from those agencies. All he was looking for was a citizenship application. He told us how happy and relieved he was.

Can you imagine going to a country and no one can understand you?

Research notes from the Information Desk

Service Design Principles

We believe government services should be:

Created with the people who use and deliver them

Equitably distributed

Prototyped and tested for usability

Rigorously tested and evaluated for impact and effectiveness

Accessible to all

Civic Innovation Office

CIVIC INNOVATION OFFICE

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Lending

Peer-to-Peer Lending is the practice of lending money to individuals or businesses through online services that match lenders with borrowers.

A recently rehabilitated criminal

Culture Change in Action
# —Mindsets and strategies for spreading innovation in your own organization

## DEVELOP A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

### *Identify Problems*

What are some challenges or slowdowns in your organization that you can try to innovate on?

1.

2.

3.

4.

### *Put People First*

Who do those challenges affect most? What solutions could you create that will improve their experiences?

### *Lend a hand*

How can you work with other teams in your organization to create solutions to their challenges or shared challenges? What's the best way to approach them and offer help?

## AMPLIFY STORIES OF INNOVATION

### *Highlight Heroes*

What innovation stories do you know of within your organization or community?

How can you help highlight these innovators?

### *Stay Tuned*

What can you do to connect with more people and find more innovation stories?

### *Inspire More Innovators*

How can you harness these stories to encourage innovation in others? What sort of events or resources can both celebrate and teach innovation?

## MAKE INNOVATION ACCESSIBLE

Culture Change in Action

### Keep the Door Open

How can you make sure everyone has access to the innovation services and resources? How can you make yourself an accessible source for innovation coaching and advice?

### Partner Up

How can you access communities, networks and talent that can partner with your organization?

What can you collaborate on?

### Prioritize Empathy

How can you make sure the people your organization affects (e.g., residents, customers, users) are being heard and consulted in innovation processes?

*Notes and Drawings*

# *Notes and Drawings*

*Notes and Drawings*

# Amplifying stories of innovation from City Hall

"It takes so long for the government to improve anything. Your jobs must be so hard. What projects have you worked on? *And how do you do it?*"

There is innovation at City Hall — it's just a little different than what people expect it to look like. We've now seen it, lived it, and celebrated it. And by focusing on delivering innovative solutions to the residents of Toronto, we can strive to do more and more each day to go *from ideas to action*.

This is the story of the Civic Innovation Office, a successful experiment in embedding a creative problem-solving approach in the City of Toronto. We'll take you behind the scenes and share our team's experiences problem-solving for people. Get to know the projects we've worked on so far and the unsung heroes that helped us along the way. Join us in collaborating on a better city for us all.

Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.

— **Jane Jacobs**,
The Death and Life of
Great American Cities