Meeting Summary

Civic Lab #3 — Realizing the Value of Data
March 26, 2019

Overview

This is a summary of key points raised in Waterfront Toronto's Civic Lab #3. The Quayside Civic Labs are a forum for subject matter experts and advocates to share advice with Waterfront Toronto about issues related to potential digital elements in the planning of Quayside. Civic Lab #1 discussed Digital Governance, Civic Lab #2 discussed Digital Stewardship, and Civic Lab #3 — the focus of this summary — focused on Realizing the Value of Data (see Appendix A. Meeting Agenda and Appendix B. Participant List).

This summary was written by Ian Malczewski and Nicole Swerhun, third party facilitators with Swerhun Inc., supporting Waterfront Toronto in delivering the Quayside Civic Labs. This summary captures key themes from the discussion; it is not intended to serve as a verbatim transcript. A draft of this summary was shared with participants for review before it was finalized.

Summary of Key Points Raised in Civic Lab #3

The points below reflect highlights of the discussion shared in plenary discussions — they are not intended to indicate consensus and the list order is not intended to imply priority.

1. **Need to focus on what we value.** Participants said the discussion should focus not just on how to value data, but on what we value. There were a number of areas where participants said that more information would be helpful to have when assessing any proposal related to Quayside. This information included:

    -   What are the potential benefits to all citizens from a smart / digital city project? What do residents want from their city more broadly (and how do new technologies enable that)?
    -   From the perspective of all three levels of government, what are the public sector objectives in exploring a smart / digital city? What does success look like?
    -   What role do taxpayers want to have in paying for / enabling private companies to make money — is there a broader public benefit?
    -   How do we balance collective public value and private value? How do we avoid privileging the few over the many?
    -   Beyond monetary value, what is the aggregate social cost of a smart / digital city?

It's important for there to be a transparent discussion that includes a range of interests and values — not just discussion between people at opposite ends of the spectrum. Waterfront Toronto should make sure these values are front-of-mind in its review of Sidewalk Labs' MIDP.

2. **There are many ways to think about the value of data.** Participants shared a range of ideas on how to think about the value of data:
    -   Data has relative / negotiated value. The value of data can depend on where it is in its lifecycle (i.e. creation, storage, transfer, and use). We need to understand the value of

data at different stages, including who is deriving what value at each stage. For example, raw data may be less valuable than data that has been processed, organized, and shared. The value of data is negotiated when it is exchanged for something else of value. Given that the value is derived from sharing it, trust must be established before any data is collected, organized, or exchanged.

- How to share the value generated by data. With Quayside, one of the key issues to think through is how the value generated by data could be shared (between Sidewalk Labs, the public, governments, Waterfront Toronto, and other potential partners, for example).
- The value of data is linked to its ability to achieve a broader public objective. What residents want (and how residents, workers, and visitors might benefit) must be key in determining the value of data. What do we need from this data? For example, could the economic value captured from data help sustain or develop other infrastructure?
- Need to think through how to set a price for civic data. Currently, it's unclear how valuable this data is from an economic standpoint.
- It's about more than monetization. Certain types of data should not be subject to monetization; instead, data could be valuable because it helps achieve or strengthen broader citizen rights.
- Need to consider externalities, similar to resource extraction. For example, while water and/or mined minerals are commodities extracted for economic value, we are evolving our collective conversations to understand their value in the context of human rights. Data, though more complex than a single commodity, is comparable. What externalities need to be considered when "extracting" the resource that is data? What are the unintended consequences of exploiting this resource strictly for its economic value?
- The greatest value of data will be realized from collective ownership and governance, since individual data points are best understood in the context of full datasets.
- The value of open / closed data is unclear. While there is some public benefit in making some kinds of data open, doing so can also disproportionately benefit private actors. There's a need to think carefully about what value open data can create for public benefit and/or whether making data open in practice only benefits a small number of private actors. Protecting / limiting access to data can have consequences that are not in the public interest, too; for example, the consolidation of property assessment data in MPAC has stifled innovation and prevented businesses like Zillow from entering Canada.

3. **Data collection, use, and stewardship.** Participants returned to discussions around data collection and use from previous Civic Labs. Topics that emerged included:
   - Roles. One of the big issues with the Sidewalk Labs project to date has been a lack of clarity around "who owns the data." Some suggested the discussion should move from data ownership to data stewardship (including who is ultimately responsible for that stewardship — recognizing that it's unlikely to be any single actor). Participants said people are cautious of having Google be the owners of data since Google already has a big leg up on small businesses. What will the role be for the various levels of government in stewarding data? And how will a monopoly over that data be avoided?
   - Who is in control of the collection of data and what rules and policies will regulate that data collection and use? For example, a camera on federal lands might be stewarded by the RCMP and governed by the rules that govern the police, but facial recognition software used in those cameras would likely be outsourced to a third party. Would that third party be governed by the same rules?

- How to balance protection of privacy with encouraging innovation, economic opportunity, and broader public benefit.
- Cybersecurity. Any discussion about collecting or storing data should also include a discussion about cybersecurity. If data is going to be stored, there should be a system for the continuous improvement and maintenance of cybersecurity. While people expect data-driven technological solutions to issues, they also expect their data to be safe.
- Privacy of personally identifiable information. Personal and non-personally-identifiable information should be explicitly separated, and there needs to be transparency that some data cannot be de-identified (since some non-personally identifiable information, when combined with other data sets, can still be used to identify people).
- "Service vs. surveillance." To better understand the options and choices around data collection and use, Waterfront Toronto should share use cases that can help people understand how different types of data could be used (and whether that data is being used to provide a service or to surveil people).

4. **Opportunity for Canadian companies.** Several participants agreed that there should be an important role for Canadian companies in digital / smart cities, including ensuring that they are able to compete and succeed. They said it's important to avoid creating a mediocre platform for a single big company that dominates because it has a competitive platform advantage. Others shared concerns that creating a "patent-free zone" in Quayside would provide more of an advantage to big corporations than small ones.

5. **Feedback about the forthcoming MIDP.** Participants shared thoughts on the forthcoming Proposed MIDP from Sidewalk Labs, and its evaluation by Waterfront Toronto:
   - Regulation. Some said that, since it's unclear what will be in the Proposed MIDP, it's hard to discuss what potential regulatory or policy changes (if any) would be required. They said that any rules to govern a smart / digital city need to be flexible, dynamic, and adaptive. Some expect the Proposed MIDP to meet existing legislative requirements.
   - Breaking the project into smaller parts. Some wondered whether the project could be tackled in stages or component parts, saying incremental progress could reduce the fear of a big mistake and could help bring focus to arriving at a defensible position (rather than an ideal end-state).
   - Need to understand the business model. Participants said that the lack of a known business model is fueling uncertainty and conspiracy theories around the project.

6. **Process.** Several participants said they were happy to see more technologists participating in the discussion — a wide variety of opinions is important in helping come up with solutions. Some suggested said it's important to start employing use cases and moving beyond abstract conversations. Even if any development at Quayside is years away, Waterfront Toronto could consider "playing with data" from another existing area — as small as intersection — to demonstrate the kinds of things that could be possible.

Next steps
Drawing and expanding on the three Civic Labs, Waterfront Toronto will host a public meeting about digital issues in May 2019. This public meeting will cover similar issues discussed in the Civic Labs and will expand to include a conversation about digital principles.

Appendix A. Meeting Agenda

Quayside Civic Lab 3 – Realizing the Value of Data
March 26, 2019
Globe and Mail Centre
351 King St E #1600, Toronto, ON M5A 0N1

AGENDA

2:00 pm   **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Charles Finley, Waterfront Toronto's Digital Strategy Advisory Panel

2:05   **Introductions & Agenda Review**
Nicole Swerhun, Facilitator, Swerhun Inc.,

2:15   **How Value Could Flow in the Urban Digital Ecosystem**
Kristina Verner, Vice President, Innovation, Sustainability & Prosperity, Waterfront Toronto

2:25   **Expert Briefing**
Each presentation will be 10 minutes, followed by up to 10 min of questions and/or comments from participants for each speaker.

- Setting the Stage – Intellectual Property in the Canadian Context
  George Takach, Senior Partner, Technology Law, McCarthy Tétrault

- Smart City Data as an Important Public Resource
  Kurtis McBride, CEO and Co-Founder, Miovision

- The World of Open Data
  Bryan Smith, ThinkData Works Inc.

- Best Practices from Around the World
  Michael Geist, Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-Commerce Law, University of Ottawa Chair, Waterfront Toronto's Digital Strategy Advisory Panel

3:45   **Break**

4:00   **Discussion on the Value of Data (small group and full room)**

1. What are the key questions that the presentations generated for you?
2. What additional information would be helpful to assessing any proposal related to realizing the value of data in Quayside?
3. Do you have any other feedback or advice for Waterfront Toronto to consider?

5:00   **Expert Reflections**
Each expert will reflect on the questions and feedback received, providing their insights into some of the key factors they suggest Waterfront Toronto consider when evaluating proposals related to realizing the value of data in Quayside.

5:25   **Closing Remarks**
Kristina Verner, Vice President, Innovation, Sustainability & Prosperity, Waterfront Toronto

5:30   **Adjourn**

Appendix B. Participant List

Organizations that were invited to Civic Lab #3 is below; organizations that attended are **bolded**.

Organization

2 For Life Media Inc.	Integrate.ai	**Peak Power**
Aqualina Bayside Development	Internet Corporation of Assignment Names and Numbers	Phire Work
Automotive Technology and Mobility Innovation	Les Interstices	Privacy Analytics
Autonomous Vehicle Innovations Network	MaRS	**PWC**
Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic	McCarthy's	**Royal Bank of Canada**
Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI)	McConnell Foundation	**Rosemary Frei**
City of Toronto	McInnes Cooper	Ryerson University
Cityspace.ai	**MetStrat Consulting**	**Sidewalk Labs**
Code for Canada	**Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation, and Trade**	**Sidewalk Toronto Resident Reference Panel**
Communitech	**Ministry of Energy, Northern Development, and Mines**	Smart Cities Challenge, Infrastructure Canada
Computer Ontario	**Ministry of Government and Consumer Services**	**Statistics Canada**
Corktown Residents and Business Association	**Ministry of Infrastructure**	Symcor
Staples Canada	Ministry of Economic Development	**Telus**
CRM Dynamics	**Miovision Technologies Incorporated**	The Citizen Lab
Dentons	MIT Senseable City Lab	The Governance Lab, New York University
Digital Justice Lab	Mozilla Foundation	Toronto Public Library
Digital Public Square	nNovation	**Toronto Region Board of Trade**
Evergreen Canada	**OCAD University**	University of Ottawa
Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Office of the Corporation Chief Information Officer	**University of Toronto**
George Brown College	Office of the Minister — Monte McNaughton	Waterfront Business Improvement Area
Inclusive Design Research Centre	**Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada**	**Waterfront For All**
Independent Electricity System Operator	**Ontario Centre of Excellence**	Waterloo University
Infrastructure Canada	Open Knowledge Canada	York Region
Innovation, Science, and economic Development, Government of Canada	Osler	

Media

Spacing Magazine	The Globe & Mail	**The Logic**