

Leveraging Value from Open Data through collaboration

Lessons learned on how Palo Alto was able to maximize value from its Open Data through collaboration

By Peter Pirnejad - Director of Development Services, City of Palo Alto
Ciaran Gilsenan – Founder Buildingeye.com
Diego May - Junar
Dean Rodatos - GreenHalo
Alex Pandel - Civic Industries

Open Data for some jurisdictions has been an innovative way to share data and spark innovative new civic applications. For others, it has been an experiment they are waiting to congeal. In either case, the question of ROI and value are still pressing. We have assembled a panel of experts to explore this business model in a way that can present value to your organization. Local Agencies are continuously seeking ways to generate more value and lowering costs. What are the lessons learned in this experiment as well as proven approaches from Palo Alto and beyond that help transform open data from an experiment to a successful business model for local agencies? We will look at what additional steps and hurdles cities should be aware of if they seek to gain value for their organization and constituents through the use of their data. Whether you have open data or are exploring the opportunity, the value proposition lies in the ability to extract value from this service. The paper explores way to bridge that gap for many cities on the fence and identify new methods to extract more value from those cities already enjoying the benefits of open data. The key, as we will see, is ability for the agency to quickly partner with the application developer in a way that helps deliver a viable product that adds value to the organization, the constituents and the developer's sponsor.

We have brought together a field of experts in a range of industries that have experience in this model. They include the following:

Peter Pirnejad of the City of Palo Alto is the Development Services Director. Development Services is a department that delivers building permits, plan checks and inspection services through a collaborative, multidepartment partnership. This department creates data that is both valuable to its customers, the City officials, and constituents. The Department strives to improve efficiency and create more value for its stakeholders by partnering with innovative developers that can create custom tools and applications.

Ciaran Gilsenan of buildingeye.com – A private application developer that has had a successful launch in Ireland with the mypp.ie site that has provided many people the ability to search for new or existing permits in a variety of jurisdictions throughout the country. In Palo Alto they have created a similar tool currently available for use by both City staff and stakeholders.

Dean Rodatos of greenhalosystems.com – A private construction debris accounting application that provides applicants the convenience of accounting for all their recycled materials as part of a construction job and the City the ease to access that data as needed to expedite their process.

Alex Pandel of civicindustries.com – Is a new application provider that graduated from Code for America and had a successful launch of a product the created in New Orleans that visualized data assembles from a host of data sets and made it available in an easy to use application for both staff and constituents alike.

Diego May of junar.com - A private corporation that provides a cloud based Open Data platform for municipalities. Their business model is centered on easy set up and maintenance by Cities without the need for complex deployments of software and infrastructure. It allows for simple and convenient access for both people satisfying their curiosity and machines enabling the creation of innovative new applications.