



# Building a Truly Smart Community

## GOVTECH SOLUTIONS SERIES

Many government CIOs and technology professionals are being tasked with creating “smart communities.” The benefits of creating one – for improved public safety, public health, economic growth and more – are numerous and worth undertaking. Everyone – citizens, businesses, government employees and more – can benefit from the creation of a smart community.

One of the key challenges governments face is there are varying definitions and expectations of what a smart community is. A government CIO planning smart community investment is likely to spend significant resources on the undertaking and needs to invest limited budget wisely for the best return.

**A “smart community” is one that uses information and communication technologies to enhance the quality and performance of urban services, such as energy, transportation, and utilities, in order to reduce resource consumption, wastage, and overall costs while improving the citizens’ quality of life.**

Several trends have led government professionals to the point of needing to define and make their communities “smart.”

First – the expectations of citizens, residents and business stakeholders of how they expect to receive services from and interact with governments have never been higher. Government CIOs need to modernize and provide citizens with experiences every bit as good as—or better than—what they receive in the private sector. That’s because today’s consumer is used to real-time, intuitive, and “smart” interaction online or on mobile for nearly everything else. Banking and retail transactions and social interactions all take place at our fingertips. Today’s community resident expects applying for a permit, licensing a business, paying a fee, and any interaction with state and local government to be just as easy, seamless, intuitive and user friendly.

Second – state and local government officials are spending on technology to help them provide services to residents and prepare for the future. E.Republic, one of the leading govtech industry sources, estimates that in 2018, state and local governments in the U.S. spent \$103 billion on IT.



Increasingly, that spend is on modern and advanced technology – like Artificial Intelligence (AI), data analytics and Internet of Things (IoT) devices and sensors – that governments need to meet resident expectations. State and local governments spent \$12 billion of that \$103 billion on IoT last year—a 17 percent year-over-year increase.

IoT refers to the rapidly growing network of connected objects that collects and exchanges data using embedded sensors. 81 percent of U.S. cities are already planning their technology strategy and spending with IoT in mind. IDC forecasts that IoT adoption rates in cities could reach 80 percent by 2025.

And third – the govtech industry and its investors are paying attention. The publication, Government Technology, publishes the GovTech 100 each year. They list the top 100 companies focused on and making a difference for state and local governments. These 100 companies on the list collectively raised \$358 million of investment in 2018 alone and have received \$2.9 billion of collective investment since they were created.

The reason for this accelerating growth and investment is that investors view this market as having huge potential. The sea change in the technology available, the economics for cities, and citizen expectations of government interactions create a perfect environment for growth.

The challenges and opportunities that governments face are common at the core: increase economic opportunity, preserve public safety, and attract population growth in a sustainable fashion. It's the use of advanced technology in ways that have a measurable benefit on all the things that CIOs need to make their cities competitive and the reason that creating a smart community may be an answer.

Calytera believes there are four bedrock principles to creating “smart” communities:

- 1) A community must digitize all the data they have and will have and combine them into a standard data set. That means data from legacy systems cannot be left behind.
- 2) A community must invest in Internet of Things devices (such as sensors to detect traffic patterns) in order to generate real-time data.
- 3) That data must be analyzed in the most efficient way possible so that actionable steps can be taken. This is why it's important to invest in AI that can properly evaluate data as quickly and effectively as possible.



4) Security and transparency must be prioritized when collecting data from citizens. Data must be handled and used in the right ways.

Deciding to create a smart community is no small feat for governments – but increasingly a necessary move if that government wants to attract the growth they need for the future. Therefore, creating a smart community is more than investing in the newest or shiniest technology or application. Rather, when communities make the choice to become smart and follow the four principles, the spark of the government technology revolution is ignited. It can help economies grow, and the potential for improving how we live is enormous.

Whether you're a citizen, a business leader, a public servant or an investor, this global government technology revolution and digital transformation will positively impact you. It's thrilling that governments today are on the cutting edge of this innovation.

In this innovation cycle, there's no such thing as "just good enough for government." We salute our state and local government leaders who are pushing to make sure that things are "GREAT enough for government."

In our future GovTech Solutions Series articles, we'll be looking more closely at each of the four principles for creating a truly smart community. If there are topics you would like to hear about, let us know!

*If your government is ready to build a smart community, we would love to help. Contact us today to set up a demo of our Amanda platform, or to take a preview before we talk, visit our short Amanda product overview video.*