

Do cities have access to the private sector data they need to make effective decisions?

To help understand and tackle the different challenges they face — from congestion in urban environments to climate change – increasingly, cities are seeking access to data collected by private sector organisations. But do they have the levels of access they need?

Cities have long built and maintained infrastructure. We depend on their roads, bridges and cycle lanes, as well as their communications networks and other utilities. As our economies and societies become more reliant on data to make effective decisions, cities also have a responsibility to build and maintain [data infrastructure](#) that supports their citizens' needs, values and priorities.

A city's data infrastructure consists of data that is managed by public institutions such as housing and transport authorities, as well as data collected and held by the private sector organisations that operate within them. This includes data generated by businesses that work with the cities to deliver public services, as well as those that provide services directly to their citizens, visitors and others. Increasingly, cities are seeking access to data collected by private sector organisations to help understand and tackle the different challenges they face.

Among businesses, there are varying levels of receptiveness to cities' advances for access to data. A study into the Copenhagen City Data Exchange found that "it was [often difficult to retrieve data from private companies](#) because they viewed the platform as 'parasitic' and of no benefit to them." In the US, Uber's resistance to the city of New York's [efforts to force them to share data](#) has led to battles in court. Elsewhere, initiatives such as [Transport for London's partnership with Waze, where the mapping company shares traffic data for planning purposes](#), reflect a more collaborative approach to increasing the flow of data between private sector organisations and cities.

As part of the ODI's [research and development project](#) designed to support cities to become more open, we will explore this topic further by asking:

- Do cities have access to data held by private sector organisations that operate within them?
- How do cities access data held by private sector organisations that operate within them?
- For what purposes do cities access data held by private sector organisations that operate within them?
- Why do private sector organisations make data available to the cities they operate in?
- What are the challenges to cities accessing data held by private sector organisations that operate with them?

We have started to collect examples of cities from around the world accessing data held by the private sector, using a matrix inspired by the [Cabinet Office Policy Lab's Styles of Government tool](#) to organise them.

[The Google Doc we are using to do this is open](#). We encourage contributions and comments directly into it – for example, thoughts about the categories we're using or examples we may have missed. Alternatively, we hope for the document to be useful for others working on and thinking about similar topics.

We plan to have conversations in the coming months with people and organisations involved in data sharing between private sector organisations and cities to validate what we find and add richer detail. We'll publish our findings openly and also assess whether it would be useful to develop any guidance on the topic.

Ultimately, we hope that the outputs of this work will help cities understand how others gain access to the data they need and inform their own approaches to accessing data held by the private sector. We'd also like it to encourage private sector organisations to consider how they can provide access to data it in order to tackle the big challenges that our cities face.

If you have any questions about this work or this document, then please contact jack.hardinges@theodi.org.

Examples of cities accessing data held by private sector organisations for different purposes and in different ways:						
	A. To stimulate innovation	B. To promote competition	C. To improve transparency and accountability	D. To support research, policy-making and planning	E. To support operational decision-making	F. To perform regulatory functions, undertake law enforcement and emergency services, and preserve national security
1. As a user Using existing publications, tools and services to access data and information			Capturing hundreds of real-world scenes in static, dynamic and historical data forms allowing businesses to test and develop their products or services within a digital environment, reducing costs and accelerating scalable deployment.	- Using research produced or commissioned by organisations that hold the data, such as Airbnb's UK Insights Report - Using research published by academics, commercial organisations and others, such as London & Partner's Hotel Development Monitor - Using statistics and other information published by national, regional and local government, such as the Office for National Statistics' tourism data - Using public data/information tools, such as Uber Movement - Using data from 'data providers', such as SafeGraph cell phone activity data (p8) - Using specialised city data/information tools, such as Strava Metro or Moovit's Mobility as a Service Platform	Real-time reporting and visualization that municipalities leverage to better understand, predict and provide early warning for Alpine mass movements.	
2. As a collaborator Working with others to develop ideas, research, initiatives and arrangements that provide access to data	- Amsterdam City Council is working on a 'sensor registry' that encourages government departments and companies to reveal the location of any Wi-Fi connected IoT sensors on a public map. The primary aim is to encourage IoT entrepreneurs to find out what data is already out there and encourage collaboration. Using infrastructure and cooperative vehicle data in the analysis of CAV performance.			- Commissioning research from academics, commercial organisations and others - Uber has partnered with the SharedStreets initiative to share sensitive pick-up and drop-off data for Washington DC for use in urban planning - The Greater Manchester Open Data Infrastructure Map provides an overview of physical, social and green infrastructure and includes data from the private sector, such as cycle network data provided by Sustrans - London's Cultural Infrastructure Map	- TfL's partnership with Waze means that the organisation shares data collected by its drivers and volunteers with TfL's operations centre for immediate use managing the road network New technology and use of transport data will be used to allow residents to travel seamlessly across different modes finding places to park their car before hopping on a bus, train or tram.	- Uber will provide the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management and emergency communications company RapidSOS with rider location data in emergencies

				includes data provided by private sector organisations, such as the Campaign for Real Ale - TfL's partnership with Waze means that the organisation shares data collected by its drivers with TfL for planning purposes - Fairbnb is committed to developing data sharing policies with the cities it operates in		
3. As a procurer Procuring goods, and commissioning or co-delivering public services, in ways that ensure access to data	“The contract to run Barcelona's bike sharing system is up for grabs. It might be won by a big company, or a local startup, but whoever wins will have to give the city back all the information it collects about how citizens are using the service. This data will then be open to any other organisation to use—to perhaps recommend new bike docking spots, or design an app that encourages people to exercise”			- Vodafone, the provider of Barcelona's telecoms services, is now contractually obliged to share data it collects with the city (which also publishes versions of it on its open data portal) - TfL's pilot to collect data about wifi users in London Underground stations was delivered with Virgin Media, who it contracts to provide the wifi service	Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) will use Chordant's software to spearhead the creation of a national commercial Connected Vehicle data Exchange (ConVEx) facility, enabling the safe, secure, simple and sustainable exchange of data.	
4. As a funder Stimulating or leading investment that, in part, generates access to data	- Washington DC's dockless bike and scooter pilot requires companies involved to have public APIs for available vehicle locations			- Washington DC's dockless bike and scooter pilot requires companies involved to provide the city with anonymised trip data		
5. As a regulator/legislator Passing, amending and enforcing laws and regulations to gain access to data	- The City of Chicago publishes data about vehicles, riders and trips from Uber, Lyft, Via and other ride-hailing apps on its Open Data Portal	UK Open Banking initiative- financial services suppliers are required to share data with other suppliers. The Brazilian Open Banking Model is similar. Sri Lanka may introduce this model soon, too	- The Louisville Metro Revenue Commission requires businesses in the city to share basic data (such as their business type and address), which it then publishes as open data every month Maybe something here about smart meters?	- New York's Taxi and Limousine Commission introduced rules in 2017 requiring Uber, Lyft and other rideshare companies to share detailed data about their passengers' journeys - If Uber, Lyft, Via, and Juno want to keep operating in New York from May 2019 they'll have to provide the Taxi and Limousine Commission with even more finely detailed data than they have done - The California Public Utilities Commission requires Uber to share data about ride numbers, driver safety information and vehicle accessibility - In 2018 Uber and Lyft lost a battle in court, resulting in data the companies		- In 2018 Barcelona and Airbnb launched a new agreement that gives city officials access to data about where apartments are located and who their registered hosts are - New York City passed an ordinance in 2018 which requires Airbnb and other p2p accommodation platforms to share a monthly report including detailed information about its hosts in order to monitor landlords who are using long-term apartments for short-term rental - In 2018 the Mayor of London asked p2p accommodation platforms to propose an 'information sharing protocol' to

				had shared with Seattle being made publicly available - The Los Angeles' Mobility Data Specification Provider API requires dockless scooter companies to send information about individual devices directly to the city with a lag of minutes/hours (and full trip info is shared after 24 hours) - Seattle, San Jose, Austin, Santa Monica, Providence and Louisville are now also using the Mobile Data Specification to compel dockless scooter providers to share data - The Seattle Department of Transportation is planning to require car-share companies to adhere to the Mobile Data Specification as part of its permitting process in 2019 City of Toronto: Data Sharing requirements on private transportation companies such as Uber and Lyft		help the city enforce its 90 day lodging rule - The San Francisco's Attorney's Office has subpoenaed four years of driver records from Uber due to suspicions of the company violating different laws - "In New York City, it was detailed trip data that helped them craft the U.S.'s first ride-hail minimum wage, for example, and a cap on ride-hail licenses" - [something on consumer protections/pricing?]
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