

# City Innovation Snapshot | Anchorage, United States

## Spotlight on Anchorage | Better outcomes through collaboration

### Overview

- ▶ Mayor: Ethan Berkowitz
- ▶ Lead staff on innovation: Brendan Babb
- ▶ Population of municipality: 298,192 (2016)
- ▶ Innovation/open data website: <http://data.muni.org>

Anchorage has developed several innovative projects through a series of philanthropic and non-profit partnerships. Its innovation team collaborated with a non-profit organisation, Code for America, and more than 30 other non-profits to develop a web site – [Start Here Anchorage](#) – for helping citizens prepare for and look for a job. In addition, the innovation team coordinated with the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) on a project called Letterpalooza, which was aimed at improving the clarity of government letters and resulted in an estimated \$1 million of additional revenues for the city.

## Vision and approach to innovation capacity

### The city's innovation strategy

Along with 56% of cities surveyed, Anchorage does not have an **explicit innovation strategy**.

The city most closely associates innovation capacity with the following terms:

Experimentation

Human-centred design

### Approaches to innovation capacity

Similar to 40% of cities surveyed, Anchorage approaches innovation capacity **both** from a **holistic/macro level**, as well as in **specific policy areas**.

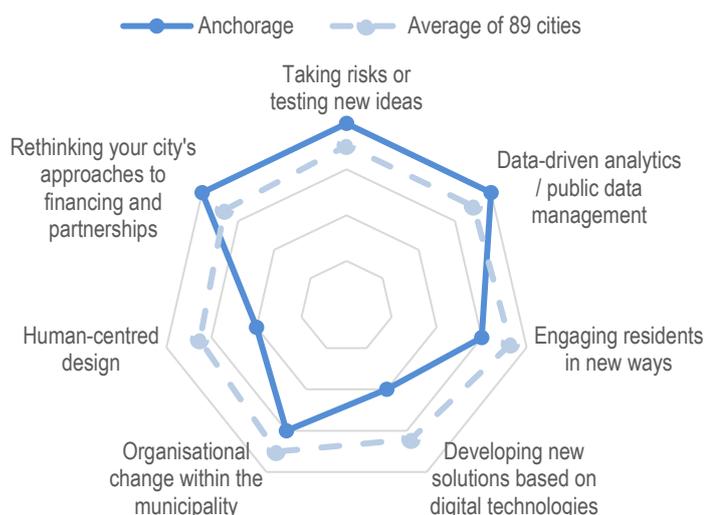
The **top two priority policy areas** for the city's innovation work include:

Social welfare / social services

Resilience

### Most common innovation activities

Anchorage's most common innovation activities are **taking risks and testing new ideas; data-driven analytics; and rethinking the city's approach to financing and partnerships**. Its innovation activities also include **engaging residents in new ways** and **facilitating organisational change within the municipal administration**.



## Funding for innovation capacity

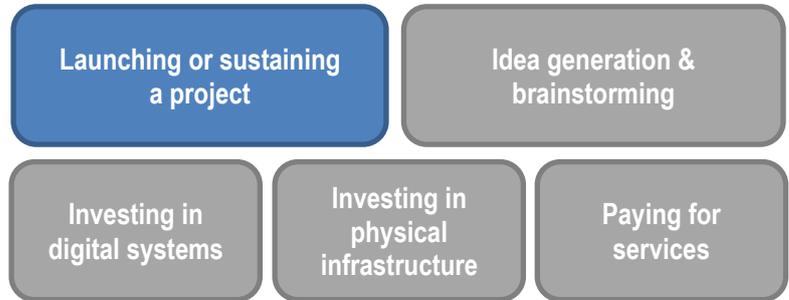
### Funding to support innovation capacity

Like 77% of cities surveyed, Anchorage has dedicated funding to support innovation capacity, which originates from the following sources:

- ✓ **Non-public funding** (philanthropy/non-profit)

### Types of activities being funded

Anchorage's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed towards **launching or sustaining a project**. This is one of the two most commonly funded activities among all cities surveyed.



## Organisational structure & staffing



Situated in the Mayor's office, Anchorage's dedicated team for innovation (i-team) consists of **4 staff**.

Staff skills and profiles include:

- ✓ **Project manager**
- ✓ **Data scientist**
- ✓ **Designer**
- ✓ **Community engagement staff**

## Partnerships for innovation & data



**Anchorage** has developed partnerships to promote its innovation capacity with **public agencies, philanthropy, and city residents/resident associations**.

To improve data use, the city has also developed **data partnerships with academia and think tanks to collect and analyse data**, as well as **with other cities**.

## Measuring outcomes

Policy areas that **benefit from sufficient data**, or **lack sufficient data**, to support innovation capacity in the city:



*NB: No response provided by the city for the policy areas in grey.*

Innovation is **helping the city** to:

- ✓ **Improve service delivery**
- ✓ **Improve internal government operations**
- ✓ **Improve cost savings and efficiency within the public sector**
- ✓ **Improve resident outcomes**

The most **critical success factors** in supporting the city's innovation work:

- ✓ **Dedicated funding**
- ✓ **Focus on measurement**
- ✓ **Dedicated innovation team**
- ✓ **Leadership from Mayor**
- ✓ **Support from outside city administration**