City Innovation Snapshot | Detroit, United States

Overview

- ► Mayor: Mike Duggan
- ► Lead staff on innovation: Megan Thibos
- ► Population of municipality: 673,104 (2017)
- ► Innovation/open data website: https://data.detroitmi.gov/

Spotlight on Detroit | Platforms to promote innovation

Detroit has been operating various platforms to promote its innovation efforts. **Improve Detroit** is **an application which allows residents to report problems in the city** by sending geo-tagged photos to the appropriate departments for resolution. Detroit also connected over 50 **data sources relevant to blight into a single demolition data platform** to more effectively manage the blight demolition pipeline and increase transparency to residents.

Vision and approach to innovation capacity

The city's innovation strategy

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

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

Experimentation   **Data analytics**

Approaches to innovation capacity

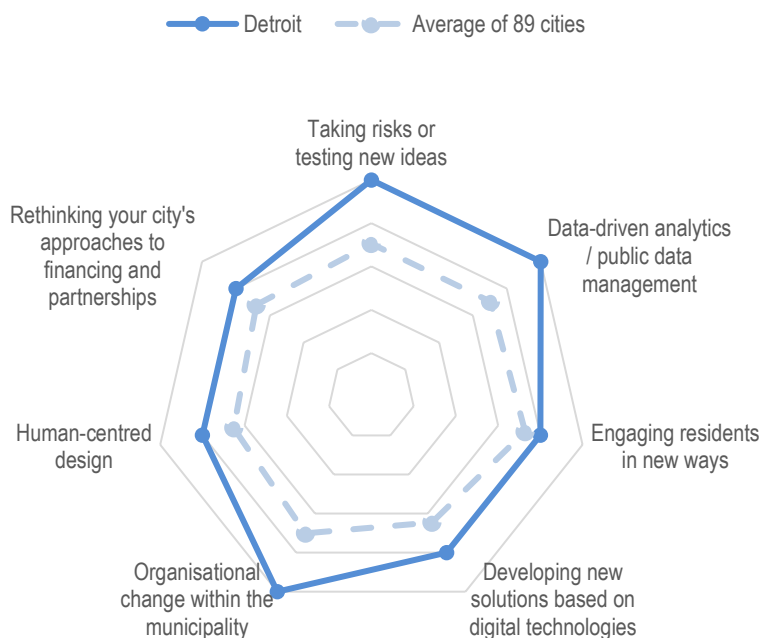Similar to over one-third of cities surveyed, Detroit approaches innovation capacity in **specific policy areas**.

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

Blight

Transport / mobility

Most common innovation activities

Detroit's most common innovation activities are **taking risks and testing new ideas**; **promoting data-driven analytics**; and **facilitating organisational change within the municipal administration**.

Radar chart legend: Detroit — Average of 89 cities

Axes: Taking risks or testing new ideas; Data-driven analytics / public data management; Engaging residents in new ways; Developing new solutions based on digital technologies; Organisational change within the municipality; Human-centred design; Rethinking your city's approaches to financing and partnerships
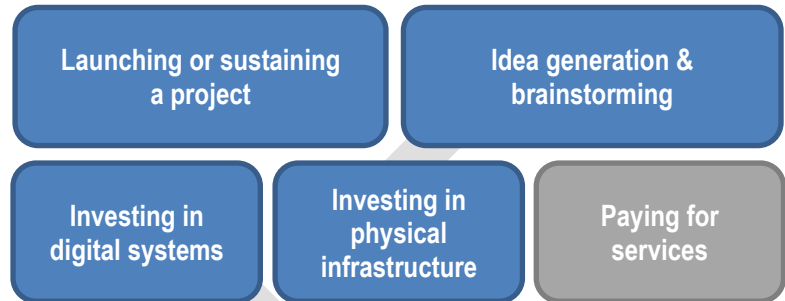

Funding for innovation capacity

Funding to support innovation capacity

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

- ✓ **Higher levels of government** (national government budgets)
- ✓ **Municipal budget** (operating budget)
- ✓ **External funding** (private sector/philanthropy/non-profit)

Types of activities being funded

Detroit's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed towards **launching or sustaining a project**, and **generating ideas & brainstorming**. These are the two most commonly funded activities among all cities surveyed. Detroit also **invests in digital systems and physical infrastructure.**

Launching or sustaining a project	Idea generation & brainstorming

Investing in digital systems	Investing in physical infrastructure	Paying for services

Organisational structure & staffing

Situated in the Mayor's office, Detroit's dedicated team for innovation consists of **5 staff**. The city also has other relevant teams including Office of Mobility Innovation, Lean Team, and Department of Innovation and Technology.

Staff skills and profiles include:
- ✓ **Project manager**
- ✓ **Data scientist**
- ✓ **Designer**
- ✓ **Engineer**
- ✓ **Sociologist**
- ✓ **Community engagement staff**
- ✓ **Front-end, back-end, and internet of things developers**

Partnerships for innovation & data

Detroit has developed partnerships to promote its innovation capacity with **other public agencies, private firms, not-for-profit organisations,** and **city residents/resident associations.**

To improve data use, the city has also developed **data partnerships with the private sector, 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:

Transport / mobility	Economic development	Housing & built environment	Policing & law enforcement	Health
Water	Waste and sewage	Labour markets & skills	Environment & climate change	Education
Culture	Social inclusion, equity	Public works	Tourism	Digital governance

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 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**