



## City Innovation Snapshot CURRIDABAT, Costa Rica

### Overview

- ▶ **Mayor:** Alicia Borja
- ▶ **Term:** 2016-2020
- ▶ **Innovation Lead:** Irene García
- ▶ **Population size:** 78 000 (2020)
- ▶ **Innovation / open data website:**  
[www.curridabat.go.cr](http://www.curridabat.go.cr)

### What is the organisational structure?

Situated within the Mayor's Office, Curridabat's dedicated innovation team consists of **3 staff**.

Staff skills and profiles include:

- Bio-technologist



### Spotlight

Curridabat uses a design-thinking approach to modernise antiquated systems, with a focus on conservation and climate change. Its Monitoring System for Ecosystem Services Improvement is a tool developed with a local research centre that guides the city in assessing 26 indicators of ecosystem quality. Findings help inform budget decisions and achieve urban environment goals. In 2013, the mayor of Curridabat created the city's first innovation team comprised of professionals from several different backgrounds. As of 2020, the position of Chief Innovation Official is located within the mayor's office.

### What is the city's innovation vision?

Like 50% of cities surveyed, Curridabat has a **formal innovation strategy**.

The city most closely associates innovation capacity with:

- **Experimentation, pilots and prototyping**
- **Human-centred design**

### What is the city's innovation approach?

Similar to more than half of cities surveyed, Curridabat approaches innovation capacity **both from a holistic / macro level and in specific policy areas**.

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

Environment /  
climate change

Waste, sanitation,  
sewage

### What innovation partnerships exist?

Curridabat has developed partnerships to **promote 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 academia and think tanks to collect and analyse data, as well as with other cities.



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### What funding is available?

Like 19% of cities surveyed, Curridabat has **no dedicated funding** to support innovation capacity.



### How is innovation helping the city?

- ✓ Anticipating and managing future challenges
- ✓ Improving resident outcomes
- ✓ Simplifying administrative procedures for firms and residents

The most critical success factors in supporting the city's innovation work are **dedicated funding, a focus on metrics, a dedicated innovation team, a culture of innovation within the municipal administration, support from the broader community, engagement with partners, academia and other leading countries, and leadership from the Mayor.**



### How is data used?

Data plays a **significant role** in decision-making and innovation efforts in Curridabat. The city has a small department dedicated to territorial intelligence and data management, and currently **uses data to align its budget process with its strategic priorities.**

Challenges preventing the use of data to support innovation goals include **insufficient interaction with data producers** and **limited compatibility of data across policy areas.**



### How are outcomes measured?

Policy areas **with sufficient data** or **without sufficient data** to support innovation capacity in the city.

Transport / Mobility	Economic Development	Housing	Policing and Law Enforcement	Health
Government Finance	Waste and Sewage	Labour Market and Skills	Environment and 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.*