



City Innovation Snapshot TORONTO, Canada

Overview

- ▶ **Mayor:** John Tory
- ▶ **Term:** 2014–2022
- ▶ **Innovation Lead:** Alice Xu; Asim Hussain
- ▶ **Population size:** 2.8 million (2016)
- ▶ **Innovation / open data website:**
www.toronto.ca/smartcity

What is the organisational structure?

Situated in the Chief Technology Officer's Technology Services Division, Toronto's Smart City team consists of **6 staff**. Toronto's Transformation and Innovation team, made up of **6 staff**, is also working on innovation in the city.

Staff skills and profiles include:

- Data Scientist
- Engineer
- Designer



Spotlight

The City of Toronto has innovation embedded (and funded via separate operating budgets) in many areas throughout the City. Toronto also plans to make the return on investment in innovation more transparent. With an active interest in driving innovation that truly benefits Torontonians, the city is convinced that the human-centred design approach to innovation can yield better customer service experience and more trust in local government. Toronto is currently exploring how to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify policy levers that can improve housing outcomes to drive better health overall.

What is the city's innovation vision?

Like 50% of cities surveyed, Toronto has no **formal innovation strategy**.

The city most closely associates innovation capacity with:

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

What is the city's innovation approach?

Similar to more than half of cities surveyed, Toronto 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:

Transport /
mobility

Housing,
homelessness

What innovation partnerships exist?

Toronto 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 the private sector, academia and think tanks, to collect and analyse data, as well as with other cities.



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What funding is available?

Like 81% of cities surveyed, Toronto has dedicated funding to support innovation capacity, which comes from the following source:

- **Municipal budget** (operating budget)

Toronto's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed towards **training staff and building capacity, generating ideas and brainstorming, investing in digital systems and physical infrastructure, and paying for third-party services.**



How is innovation helping the city?

- ✓ Improving service delivery
- ✓ Improving resident outcomes
- ✓ Gaining efficiency within the public sector

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



How is data used?

Toronto currently does not use data to align its budget process with its strategic priorities. Challenges preventing the use of data to support innovation goals include **lack of reliable data, insufficient interaction with data producers and limited compatibility of data across policy areas.** Toronto also reports that **data are seldom shared among agencies.**

Toronto **publishes open data to a central, public online location and provides clear how-to guidance to help residents access and use city data.**



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