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CITY TECH LAUNCHES TWO NEW ORGANIZATIONS TO FOSTER INFRASTRUCTURE INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY HEALTH AND DEVELOPS OPEN-SOURCE TOOLKlT FOR RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

City Tech to Close Its Doors as New Programs Continue Legacy of Collaborative Innovation

Chicago – City Tech Collaborative (City Tech) is launching two new, independent organizations focused on civic infrastructure innovation and community health and wellness, as well as an open-source toolkit to support and scale direct resident engagement in urban innovation. Following the successful launch of these efforts, City Tech will close its doors.

The newly launched organizations, Civic Infrastructure Collaborative and SWITCH, will address urban infrastructure and community health, respectively. Later this year, City Tech will also publish tools related to its resident engagement program, the Civic User Testing group (CUTgroup).

Since its founding in 2015, City Tech has completed over 30 projects and solution development collaborations to make cities happier, healthier, and more productive. With an ecosystem of more than 100 corporate, municipal, civic, and philanthropic partners, City Tech has played a critical role in advancing practical, tech-enabled products and services.

“City Tech has a rich history of driving partnerships and developing collaborative solutions to cities’ greatest challenges,” said Brenna Berman, CEO of City Tech Collaborative. “We’re excited to launch efforts that dive even deeper and address industry-specific needs in the rapidly evolving smart cities arena.”

CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE COLLABORATIVE
The new Civic Infrastructure Collaborative is an independent nonprofit organization that will bring together physical, digital, and social resources to help cities thrive. Its mission is to drive public value from core urban infrastructure through cross-sector collaboration and technology-enabled innovation.

Civic Infrastructure Collaborative will work with asset owners, operators, technology providers, public officials, and residents to develop and implement place-based infrastructure solutions. The organization will harness important trends like digitization, connectivity, urban systems integration, and adaptive reuse to identify new roles that urban infrastructure assets can play and new sources of value for the communities they serve. Millennium Garages in downtown Chicago will be the anchor facility for the organization’s first projects. Learn more about Civic Infrastructure Collaborative here and at www.InfrastructureForward.org.

SUSTAINABLE WELLNESS through INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY, & COLLABORATIVE HEALTH (SWITCH)
The second organization, SWITCH – which stands for Sustainable Wellness through Innovation, Technology, & Collaborative Health – will enable solution development for healthcare challenges. SWITCH will bring
together skilled partners, engage residents and healthcare patients to ensure they have an active voice in solution creation, and leverage a robust and proprietary racial equity and inclusion methodology to address inherent bias in existing solution development processes. The organization’s first solution will focus on solving health inequities and building trust between healthcare providers and residents in historically underserved communities. SWITCH will leverage OSF HealthCare’s existing CommunityConnect software and expand the program to non-OSF clinics and community-based organizations to serve Medicaid patients; in addition, the team will integrate SWITCH’s racial equity and inclusion tool into the application’s care plan development. Learn more about SWITCH here.

OPEN-SOURCE RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMING
Since its inception, City Tech has prioritized creating inclusive, equitable solutions and believes that successful public-facing technologies rely upon direct resident engagement and community-focused design. The Civic User Testing group (CUTgroup) has been an integral part of City Tech’s work since a merger between City Digital and the Smart Chicago Collaborative in 2017. Through CUTgroup, City Tech has offered guidance, convened residents, and conducted specialized user testing to support the development and roll-out of digital tools, websites, technology plans, and civic products. Today, CUTgroup includes nearly 1,600 Chicago residents and has supported the design and deployment of over 25 new products, technologies, and public-facing solutions.

In 2020, City Tech created a Civic User Testing Network of five resident engagement programs in the U.S. and Canada. Chicago, Miami, Cleveland, Detroit, and Toronto have joined the Network to share resources and develop best practices, building a more robust framework to make local technology more user-friendly, accessible, and relevant.

Over the next two months, City Tech will engage key stakeholders and develop a toolkit to support and scale direct resident engagement in urban innovation. Building on existing best practices and the CUTgroup approach, City Tech will make these tools available on open-source platforms by the end of 2021.

CITY TECH COLLABORATIVE: HISTORY AND IMPACT
City Tech was founded in 2015 (as City Digital) to facilitate collaboration among public officials, technology companies, startups, civic institutions, academia, and cross-sector stakeholders. In 2017, City Digital merged with Smart Chicago Collaborative – a nonprofit organization focused on increasing city residents’ access to the internet and digital tools to help people connect with local government – to form City Tech Collaborative.

As City Tech evolved, its work and impact grew to encompass transportation, infrastructure, public health, and emerging opportunities to shape urban life. City Tech has offered a platform for local government, universities and research institutions, startups, and tech corporations to tackle our cities’ most complex challenges. Signature City Tech solutions range from tracking urban heat islands and assessing hotspot mitigation efforts, to improving safety and visitors’ experiences in shared urban spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional solutions include expanding health data on the Chicago Health Atlas, mitigating congestion from freight deliveries, and understanding the economic impact of events such as Chicago Blues Fest and Jazz Fest.

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In 2019, City Tech elevated its solution development process by launching the Advanced Mobility Initiative, an effort to create a more seamless, connected, accessible, and far-reaching urban transportation systems for people and goods. The following year, City Tech established the Millennium Gateway Innovation Lab, a groundbreaking partnership to integrate parking more fully into urban transportation systems, develop tech-enabled solutions for smart infrastructure management, and cultivate value-added services and space uses. All of these solutions illustrate technology’s tremendous potential to improve urban life, while recognizing that no single organization or sector has the resources, capabilities, or perspective to solve cities’ biggest challenges alone. City Tech has lived up to ambitious goals for public-private partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, and diversity through a combination of strategic and tactical technology integration, market validation, partnership development, and civic engagement. City Tech developed and implemented much-needed structure and tools – including multiparty legal agreements, go-to-market channels, policy and landscape analysis, and racial equity and inclusion assessments – to ensure that innovation can flourish in the real world as well as under pilot conditions.

In addition, City Tech has been a key convener in lesson-sharing to broaden the impact of smart cities solutions. Outreach efforts include an international, multi-day City Solutions conference with the United Nations’ URAIA platform, UN-Habitat, and the Global Fund for Cities Development. City Tech coordinated lesson-sharing among senior city officials during the 2017 North American Mayors’ Climate Summit, and City Tech co-chaired the City of Chicago’s 2018-19 New Transportation & Mobility Task Force. City Tech has moved critical topics and conversations forward in partnership with notable leaders including Reuters, CityAge, MOVE and Fira Barcelona. City Tech’s work is showcased in publications including Wired, American Inno, Crain’s Chicago Business, the Chicago Tribune, the Chicago Sun-Times, and Smart Cities Dive.

The organization’s unique mission, approach, and impact have attracted partnership, participation, and support of many of the most influential companies and organizations in the smart cities arena. Since its founding, City Tech’s board of directors has included corporate representatives from Microsoft, Accenture, Mastercard, ComEd, HERE Technologies, and HBK Engineering. These and many other corporate members’ strategic input, technical capabilities, and financial contributions have informed, enabled, and helped to scale City Tech’s work.

City Tech is grateful for grant investments and program support from the US federal government and some of the countries’ leading philanthropic institutions, including US Department of Energy, the US Economic Development Administration, the John G. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Otho S.A. Sprague Memorial Institute, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and Data.org, as well as partnerships with prominent research institutions such as Argonne National Laboratory. These and other funders have trusted City Tech to help cities and their residents make good use of technology to create jobs, accelerate economic development, improve quality of life, and ensure the broadest possible access to these benefits across geographically and demographically diverse communities.

City Tech has been recognized for its achievements including winning the 2020 Chicago Innovation Awards for its work on the Chicago Health Atlas, and City Tech team members have received local and national accolades as rising stars and leaders in their fields. City Tech alumni are serving as senior officials in state and national government, business executives, and research experts in academia.
Visit www.CityTech.org to learn more about City Tech’s work.

**About City Tech Collaborative**
City Tech Collaborative (City Tech) is an urban solutions accelerator that tackles problems too big for any single sector or organization to solve alone. City Tech’s work uses IoT sensing networks, advanced analytics, and urban design to create scalable, market ready solutions. Current initiatives address mobility, healthy cities, connected infrastructure, and emerging growth opportunities. City Tech was born and raised in Chicago, and every city is a potential partner. Visit www.CityTech.org for more information.

**About Civic Infrastructure Collaborative**
Civic Infrastructure Collaborative drives public value from core urban infrastructure through cross-sector collaboration and technology-enabled innovation. As a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, the Collaborative uses a proven methodology to identify, develop, deploy, and scale inclusive infrastructure solutions. We help infrastructure asset owners, operators, public officials, technology providers, and other stakeholders to deliver economic, social, and environmental returns for the communities they serve. Visit www.InfrastructureForward.org for more information and follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.

**About SWITCH**
Sustainable Wellness through Innovation, Technology, & Collaborative Health (SWITCH) a collaboration platform that accelerates, innovates, and scales tech-enabled solutions. Our mission is to increase health equity and measurably improve community health delivery and wellness outcomes in Chicago’s most underserved communities through collaboratively developing solutions; engaging residents and patients to ensure they have an active voice in solution creation; and leveraging a robust racial equity and inclusion (REI) methodology to address inherent bias in existing solution development processes.

**About CUTgroup**
City Tech’s Civic User Testing group (CUTgroup) is a 1,600+ member civic engagement program that invites Chicago residents to contribute to emerging technology while providing public, private, and social sector partners with feedback to improve product design and deployment. Learn more at www.CityTech.org/CUTgroup.

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