

# Being Watched

## Embedding Ethics in Public Technology

Building technical, legal, and social approaches to maximize the trusted use of public technologies & video data

**Technology & Information Policy Institute  
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# A multi-component research approach



Understand conceptions of **privacy** among citizens, local journalists, and city officials

Build and test differential access models



Identify open records law at State level and relevant data management issues

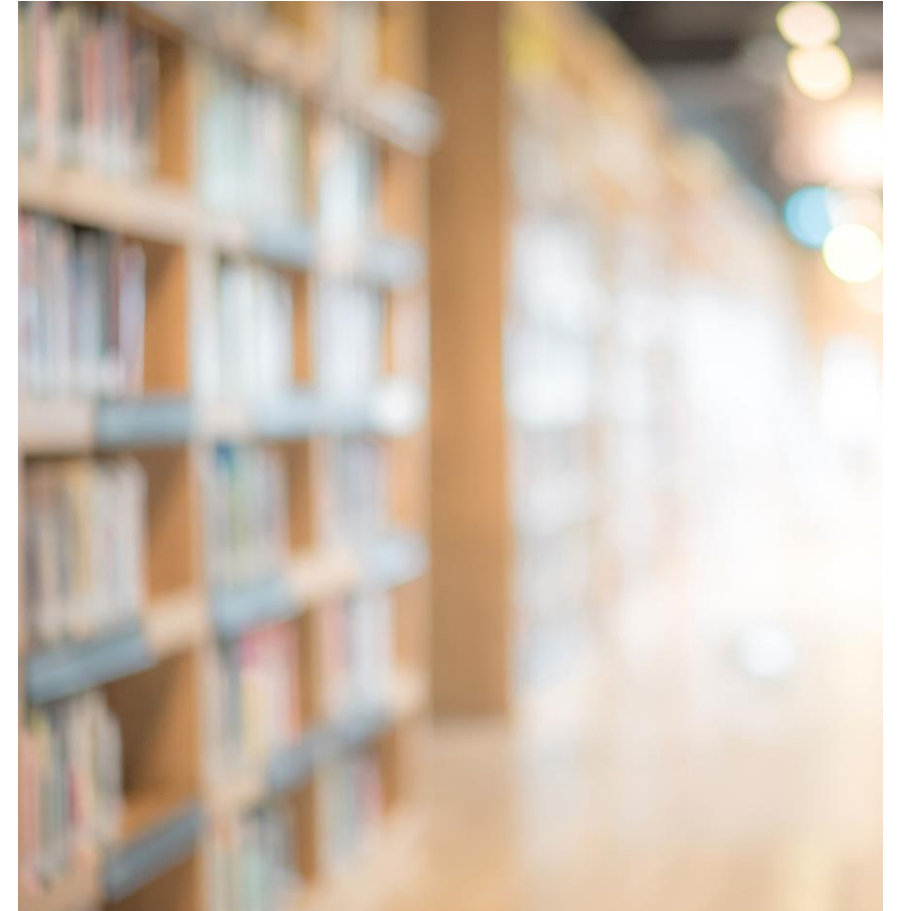
Design smart city literacy training and initiate citizen engagement



# Translating ethics into city privacy practices

## Why this research?

- "smart city" literature
- Broad use of monitoring technologies in cities  
e.g., the drone group in Austin
- Little guidance, few ordinances in US cities
- **But** dispersed guidelines/policies, privacy officers
- 'Records management' not set up to deal with data  
from sensors & surveillance tech



## Research Approach

Rely on experts, city officials, ordinary people, and city units in order to understand variations in informational norms.



Delphi survey



Interviews, Case Studies



Focus groups, Survey



Workshops



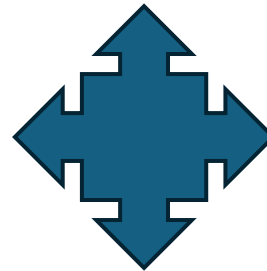
Toward Differential Access & Civic Policies



City workers/data handlers/ departments



Institutions - e.g., libraries



Focus Groups



Interviews, fieldwork

# Contextual integrity theory at work

## Core Findings from Focus Groups:

### Benefits/Concerns:

- ❖ Security aspects of surveillance tech
  - a) Younger people assume there is no privacy anyway, so make sure tech is used for "good" purposes
  - b) Complications with personal security uses of cameras in quasi-public spaces (Ring networks)
  - c) Perception of public cameras influenced by popular culture – unaware of other uses
- ❖ Would like to feel that tech is not just a shortcut to dealing with bigger, complex problems...

### Attributes of data:

- ❖ Uncertain exchange: Want transparency – data use, control. Question where the data 'go'
- ❖ Data governance needed at the local level
- ❖ Data Literacy/Algorithmic Literacy needs

# Core findings from focus groups

## Contexts:

❖ Uncertainty of spatial qualities: What is public space anymore?

- a) Shared spaces such as apartment hallways
- b) Ring cameras and other private systems see into public space
- c) Seeing the outside street from one's living spaces
- d) Drones complicate issue of publicness

❖ Real scenarios where tech is countered: contextual significance

- a) No one-size-fits-all approach
- b) Aware of trade offs between privacy and security
- c) Awareness of Austin specifically as an increasingly tech city

## Actors:

❖ People's own identity/background figures into how they think about risks (ex: undocumented status, ICE investigations, traffic accidents)

# Four Frameworks for Thinking Through AI Technologies in Cities

<i>Functional Analysis</i>	<i>Stakeholder Analysis</i>	<i>Risk Mitigation Analysis</i>	<i>Data Lifecycle Analysis</i>
<p>Articulating the functions and activities in public spaces that result in smart cities' camera data generation and management.</p> <p><b><i>A functional analysis should include a detailed, documented, and agreed-upon list of the functions, activities, and processes in which smart city cameras are typically employed, which can later be augmented with a listing of the accompanying structured and unstructured data that emerge from these processes.</i></b></p>	<p>Considering stakeholder-defined data control models and opinions regarding the business, administration, economics, and social values of camera-based surveillance technologies and resulting data.</p> <p><b><i>A multi-faceted stakeholder analysis should identify the interests, power, and differences among the various stakeholders, and how their needs align with the mission and vision of municipal entities as they operate within a smart city environment</i></b></p>	<p>Working in concert with legal and regulatory requirements, industry standards, and local policies and processes impacting technology adoption, business functions, and data and data governance issues.</p> <p><b><i>Risk mitigation analysis addresses two main concerns. The first concern is the potential impact of monitoring and surveillance technologies on civil rights and civil liberties, which poses potential harm to specific groups of people. The second concern is the need for public access to records generated by smart cameras, which is essential for transparency in governmental functions and activities.</i></b></p>	<p>Mapping of public data as it moves through the stages of creation, streaming, use, reuse (including instances of proactive or reactive disclosure), sharing, long-term retention, and deletion.</p> <p><b><i>At its most basic, understanding the lifecycle of data involves delineating data types and what happens to that data from creation/ generation, to collection, preparation/ processing (categorization, organization, transformation, analysis, and visualization), deployment/use, sharing, storage, and disposition.</i></b></p>



# Directions for Shaping City AI Use

- **Literacy** about surveillance technologies – emphasis among cities grappling with AI
- Deliberate on a more **public** policy – engagement possibilities
- **Transparency**: what are peoples' expectations? What are the norms in terms of what patrons believe is going on with monitoring technologies? Fairness concerns?
- **Staff Training** - ethical considerations, data handling, accountabilities

# Resources

- Portland's [\*Digital Justice, Rights and Surveillance\*](#) zine
- One model: League of Minnesota Cities. (2023). [\*Cities and artificial intelligence \(AI\): What you should know.\*](#)
- Thoughtful Report from New York City: [NYC AI Strategy](#)
- [Technology & Information Policy Institute.org](#) for more resources, including tutorial materials & White Paper