Center for Science, Technology and Environmental Policy Studies

Arizona State University

Open Data, Participation, and Technology Use in Local Government Agencies: Findings from a National Survey

Mary K. Feeney
Eric W. Welch

Leonor Camarena
Federica Fusi

2018

Acknowledgements

Research Team

Mary K. Feeney
Associate Professor & Lincoln Professor of Ethics in Public Affairs
Associate Director, CSTEPS
mkfeeney@asu.edu

Eric W. Welch
Professor
Director, CSTEPS
ewwelch@asu.edu

Research Associates
Leonor Camarena, Project Manager
Federica Fusi

Center for Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy Studies

Mission

The Center for Science, Technology, and Environment Policy Studies (CSTEPS) serves as an international focal point for interaction among faculty, researchers, students, and practitioners on ideas, problems and promises at the nexus of science, technology, and the environment.

Contact Us

School of Public Affairs, Suite 450
411 N. Central Ave.
Phoenix, AZ. 85004

Website: https://csteps.asu.edu/

Twitter: @CSTEPS_ASU

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Executive Summary

This report presents findings from the 2018 national survey of local governments on public participation, technology use, open, and work life as part of a long-term research study interested in understanding the relationships between technology and civic engagement in local governments sponsored by the Center for Science, Technology, and Environment Policy Studies (CSTEPS) at Arizona State University.

The 500 cities included in the original sample are distributed across the country, as shown in **Figure 1**. In total, we received responses from 351 cities. **Figure 2** shows the geographical distribution of the 2018 respondent cities. Response cities are clustered in California and on the East Coast, which is consistent with the distribution of the 500 cities in the original sample.

This report draws from the analysis of survey data and is organized into four sections: participation, utilization of technology and social media, open data, and organizational culture and volunteering. Description of these sections as well as key findings and discussions of each section follow.

Figure 1. Geographical distribution of 500 sample cities
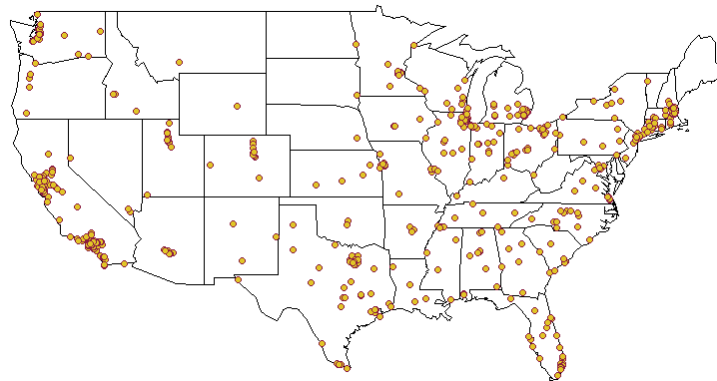
Figure 2. Geographical distribution of 351 respondent cities
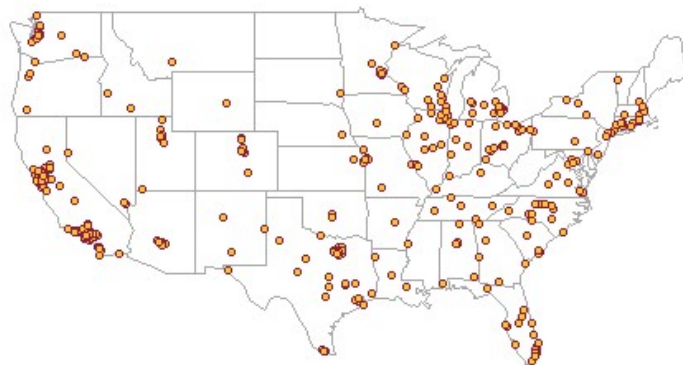
I. Participation

Public participation broadly refers to the process by which citizens and external stakeholders take part in agency decisions. Public participation can foster citizenship values, improve public trust, maintain legitimacy, inform government decision making and facilitate decision implementation (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004; Roberts, 2004). Local governments tend to be more proactive in and benefit more from public engagement practices because citizens typically have a special commitment, contextual knowledge and proximate social network to contribute to improved government outcomes (Peters, 2001; Scott, 2006).

Previous studies have found managerial views on citizen participation to play an important role in governments' citizen involvement efforts (Handley & Howell-Moroney, 2010; Yang & Callahan, 2007). Public participation in local government decision-making varies along important dimensions: participant type, frequency, and form of participation. This section will address managerial views on citizen participation and explore these three dimensions of citizen participation to gain a better understanding of public participation at local governments.

Key findings and observations:

- Among civil society actors, individual citizens (49%) are the most active participants in the government decision-making processes, followed by consultants or paid experts (37%) and neighborhood associations (29%). Participating least in local government decision-making are news media (8%) and religious groups (6%).
- Among government actors, the respondents indicate the internal city departments (91%) engages the most and other city departments (76%) participated most in decision-making processes. In contrast, the Governor's office "rarely" or "never" participates in municipal government decision-making (77%).
- According to municipal department heads, members of the public tend to participate with greatest frequency by giving feedback on service quality issues (50%), followed by input on long rang plans (44%).

II. Technology and Social Media

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in public organizations holds the potential to improve government transparency and increase public participation by providing effective and efficient means of disclosing information to citizens and other stakeholders about the processes, structures, and products of government, as well as by enabling the civil society to interact with public organizations in a more convenient way. At the same time, ICT adoption requires technical capacity and commitment from government employees and, in some cases, might expand expectations for workload and responsiveness to constituent requests. ICTs include presenting information on websites, offering transactions online, and enabling stakeholders and

government to communicate through two-way mechanisms. More recently, cities have been under increasing pressure to adopt social media platforms for information dissemination, coordination, and interaction with the public. This section of the report focuses on social media use in municipal government organizations and presents findings on the extent to which local governments are using technologies and respondents' perceptions of them.

Key findings and observations:

- The most common social media platforms used by local governments are Facebook (87%), Twitter (70%), YouTube (50%) and LinkedIn (45%).
- Respondents use different social media tools for different purposes. Mostly, social media are used to disseminate information to government stakeholders. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are also widely utilized to encourage public participation, but less than 40% use social media tools for collecting input on policy planning or feedback on public services.
- Respondents also use social media for personal purposes. One-third of respondents have at least one personal social media account (Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram), with 22% of respondents reporting two social media accounts and another 22% having three accounts.
- Respondents indicate using social media platforms more often for personal than professional purposes. This is especially true of Facebook and Instagram. Twitter is the social media that it is the least used for personal purposes and most used for professional purposes.
- Respondents agree that technology can be useful for their work activities, but report gaps between their needs and the skills and the technology capacity of their organization

III. Open Data

Open data refers to data that are openly and freely accessible online (Attard, Orlandi, Scerri, & Auer, 2015; Janssen, Charalabidis, & Zuiderwijk, 2012). Cities are increasingly using open data portals to provide public access to government data. Many governments have established open data portals in response to demands for government transparency. Data portals can include a range of datasets including maps, tabular data, utilities information, crime data, and permit and licensing data. Advocates of open data note that public access to government data can lead to better informed citizens, advance innovation and entrepreneurship in cities, increase public engagement, and ensure better oversight over government activities. At the same time, open data can result in data breaches, overload of data, and data that cannot be effectively used by stakeholders. This section of the report focuses on the availability of open data portals, how cities are using them, and the perceptions of their potential for producing public outcomes.

Key findings and observations:

- Respondents, in general, are not optimistic about the potential outcomes from open data initiatives. More than half of respondents believe that open data are "not much" or "not at all" helpful for producing positive outcomes such as enabling nonprofits to serve the community (59%), facilitating citizen involvement in public affairs (82%), allowing journalists to cover government activities more thoroughly (77%), providing the public with greater ability to monitor government performance (87%), and making government officials more accountable to the public (87%).
- One-third of respondents indicate that open data portals will be "very" or "somewhat" helpful in the creation of new business products and services.
- A majority of department heads report that open data are "not much" or "not at all" helpful in providing the public with greater ability to monitor government performance (87.5%) or making government officials more accountable to the public (86.8%).
- When asked about different types of data that can be posted to open data portals, on average, respondents were most comfortable with sharing health and safety records of local restaurant (63.5%) and least comfortable with sharing performance of individual teachers at local schools (16.4%).

IV. Organizational Culture & Volunteering

The organizations where people work play an important role not only in shaping their experiences at work (e.g. job satisfaction, identification with the organization), but also their perceptions of how well the organization serves and represents the community (e.g. representative bureaucracy), and their interactions with the community (e.g. volunteering).

Local governments must take into account the values, experiences, and perceptions of their employees in order to better organizational work and its impact in the broader community. Measures of job satisfaction, routinization, centralization, innovation, and risk taking enable researchers to investigate differences across department and managerial type, understand the ways in which work environment shape outcomes, and assess ways to improve organizational life. In this study we also ask respondents about the organization's identify – is the organization more collectivist, individualistic, or communitarian. We also ask respondents to report on their own volunteering activities and if those activities are sponsored by their employer.

Key findings and observations:

- Representative Bureaucracy: Nearly all of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that bureaucrats in government agencies are responsible for representing the interests and needs of all racial and ethnic groups (97%). Nearly three-quarters (73%) "agree" or "strongly agree" that bureaucracy should have roughly the same racial or ethnic background as the population as a whole.

- While respondents believe the bureaucracy should represent the population, those beliefs to not extend to political leadership. 80% of respondents "strongly disagree" or "disagree" that people are best represented in politics by leaders of their own racial or ethnic background.
- Innovation: Most respondents report that their organization has a strong commitment to innovation and that people that develop innovative solutions to problems are rewarded (81%).
- Respondents indicate that they "strongly disagree" or "disagree" that a person who wants to make her or his own decisions would be quickly discouraged in the agency (90%).
- On average, more than half of the respondents "strongly agree" or "agree" that employees are not afraid to take risks (92%).
- Volunteering: On average, respondents report volunteering 3 hours during a typical week. Respondents volunteer in a variety of organizations including social or community service groups (58%), religious organizations (38%), youth organizations (30%), and education organizations (28%).
- 49% of respondents indicate that their workplace sponsors a volunteer activity for employees.
- Previous work experience: Among respondents, 22% report having previous work experience in the nonprofit sector and 26% have experience in the private sector.
- Among respondents, work experience in the non-profit sector ranges from 1 year to 42 years, with a mean of 3 years. Private sector work experience ranges from 1 year to 42 years with a mean of 6 years. Many respondents worked less than 10 years in both the non-profit and private sector, with the majority of respondents (54%) indicating that they worked less than ten years in the private sector.

About the Survey

For the 2018 National Survey of Local Governments on Technology and Civic Engagement, the research team used the sample developed in the 2010 City Survey of department leaders in local governments nationwide. This sample has been updated and revised with each iteration of the study. In the spring of 2018, the researchers conducted web searches and called municipal governments to determine whether local public officials who had participated in the 2016 survey were still employed in the same position. Students updated all contact information when the individual in the position had changed and confirmed information for individuals who remained in the same position.

The survey was administered to five lead administrators in 500 city governments where the government is of sufficient size and capacity to purchase and use technology for civic engagement. The survey was administered to individuals working in the following five positions: City Manager/City Administrator, Director of Community and/or Economic Development, Finance Director, Director of Parks and Recreation, and Deputy Police Chief. The survey was administered online using Sawtooth Software® from April 18, 2018 to August 7, 2018. Below we describe the population and sampling procedures for the survey.

Population and sampling procedures

The survey focuses on local government managers in five positions that have potential for high levels of citizen engagement. These five individuals in a sample of 500 cities were contacted and invited to participate in the study, for a sample size of 2500 municipal officials.

1. City Manager/City Administrator

2. Director of Community and/or Economic Development

3. Finance Director

4. Director of Parks and Recreation

5. Deputy Police Chief

The research team used city websites to confirm the contact information of the municipal officials. When information was not available online, the researchers called the municipal offices to collect and confirm institutional, administrative and demographic information.

Summary of survey implementation and response rate

Survey respondents were invited to participate in the survey via email invitation (April 18, 2018). Following the initial alert email, reminder emails were sent each week. Reminder phone calls were conducted from May 23, 2018 – June 29, 2018. The survey was closed on August 7, 2018 with 590 complete responses, 31 partials, 23 known refusals, and 243 email addresses confirmed as unreachable. The final sample, adjusted for ineligibles, is 2178. The response rate can be calculated as 590/2178 (27%) for completed responses. For further information, please refer to Appendix 1.

Goal

This project is designed to provide several levels of information and knowledge about civic engagement and technology use in local government agencies in the United States. In 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016 we conducted similar surveys, providing a baseline and changing descriptive understanding of the status of technology for civic engagement in government agencies. This fifth survey will enable researchers to track how technology use is changing in local governments. In the 2018 version, we take a more focused approach to open data in local governments. The project provides a navigable dataset that includes survey data, website data, and other institutional data (e.g. census data) that can be made available to partners or other groups for further analysis.

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to the many government managers across the United States who have participated in this study. In some cases, respondents have participated in all five surveys. Without their time and honesty, this research would not be possible.

Part I. <u>Participation</u>

This section explores the mechanisms by which the public participates in local government decision-making. The analysis is organized into two sections: 1) frequency of participation by citizens and various other stakeholders; and 2) frequency of public input in different operational and decision-making areas.

Who participates and how often?

Individuals, citizen groups (e.g. civil society actors), and other government actors participate in local governments' decision-making. **Figure 1.2** displays the frequency with which each civil society actor participates in the government decision-making. Figure 1.2 shows that interest groups are the most active participants in municipal government decision-making; 49% of the respondents indicate that individual citizens "often" or "very often" participate in their decision-making. The next most active participants are consultants or paid experts (37%) and neighborhood associations (29%). Participating least in local government decision-making are news media and religious groups. Only 8% and 6% of respondents indicate that the news media and religious groups "often" or "very often" participate in their decision-making, respectively.

Figure 1.2. Frequency of participation in decision-making by civil society actors
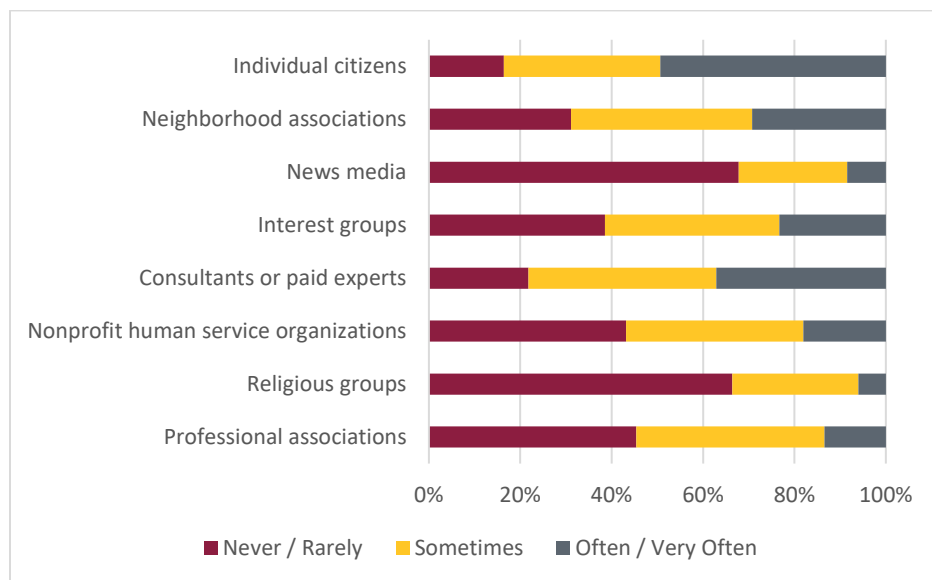
Figure 1.3 shows participation in government decision-making by government actors. 76% identify internal department staff as a participant who engages "often" or "very often". In contrast, Governor's office "rarely" or "never" participate in municipal government decision-making, as noted by 77% of respondents.

Figure 1.3. Frequency of participation in decision-making by government actors
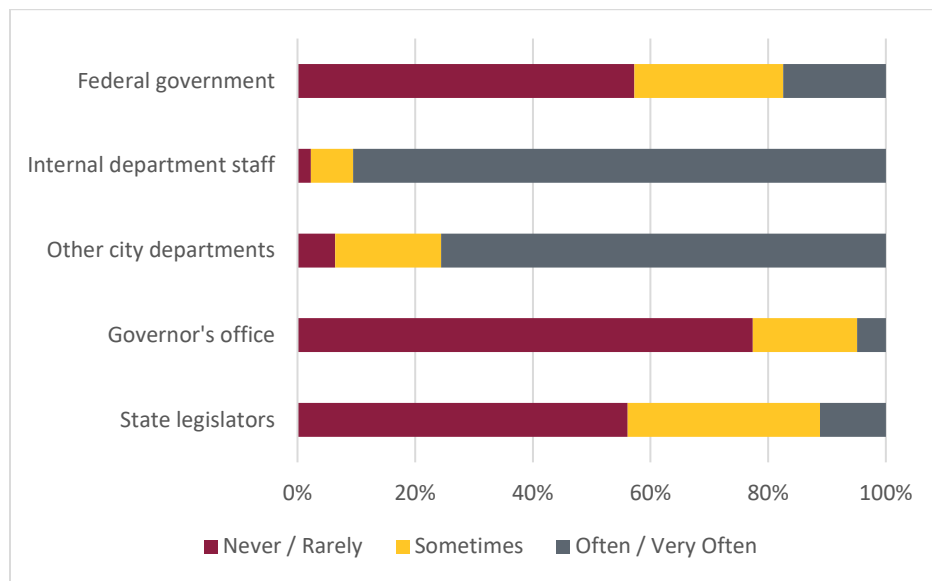
How do participants contribute to government decision-making?

Participants typically contribute to government decision-making processes by offering suggestions on service delivery, providing feedback, and exercising oversight over the conduct of agencies and employees. **Figure 1.4** shows that respondents report varying levels of the extent to which they contribute to government decision-making in the three categories. Specifically, service quality issues receive the most public input, as approximately 50% of respondents report that they "often" or "very often" receive public input. While the public, in general, provides relatively limited feedback on department management and operation, they demonstrate a higher level in the participation in long range planning, with 44% respondents indicating that the public "often" or "very often" provides input. Finally, respondents indicate that the public is not actively involved in exercising oversight over the government; over half of the respondents report that they "rarely" or "never" receive public input on formal oversight of their organization or their employee conduct.

Figure 1.4. Frequency of public input by seven decision-making areas
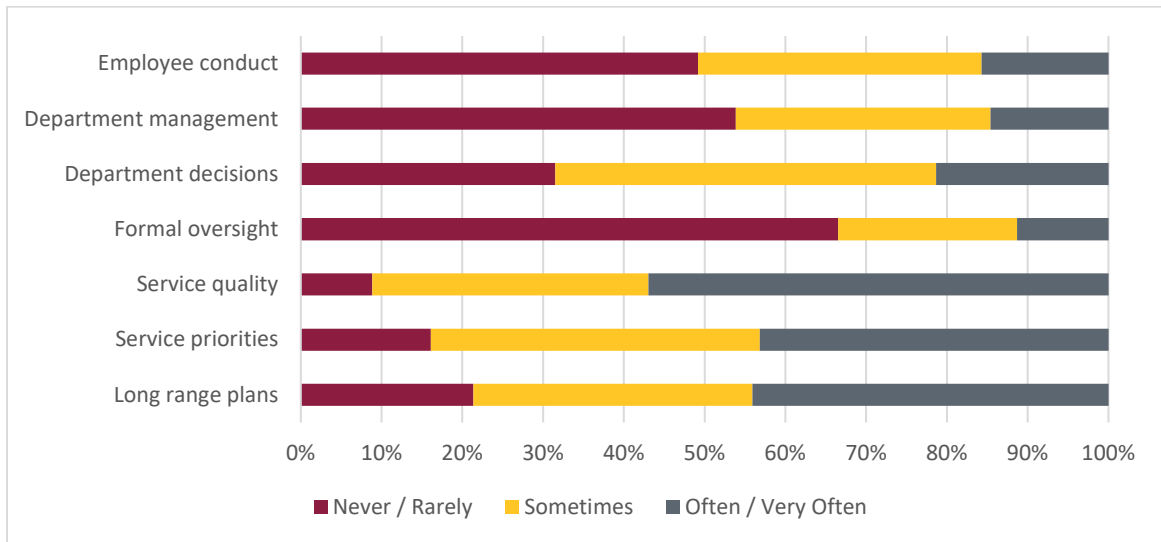
Part II. Technology & Social Media

In this section, we present findings on the use of different technologies for public participation and online provision of services and social media use for work and personal purposes.

What social media platforms do local government managers use?

The survey asks respondents if their organization uses social media platforms for work purposes and how often they use these tools. Results are presented in **Table 2.1**. The most common technology used by local governments is Facebook, with 87% of respondents reporting that they use Facebook. The second most common technology is Twitter (70%), followed by YouTube (50%) and LinkedIn (45%). Twitter and Facebook are also the most frequently utilized social media tool, with public managers reporting that they use them several times a week.

Table 2.1. Organizational use of social media platforms

Social media	No	Yes	Frequency (mean)
Facebook	80(13%)	541(87%)	5.22
Twitter	187(30%)	434(70%)	5.15
YouTube	280(45%)	341(55%)	3.77
LinkedIn	342(50%)	279(45%)	3.69
Instagram	385(62%)	236(38%)	4.71

6=Daily or almost daily; 5=Several times a week; 4=About once per week; 3=About once every two weeks; 2=About monthly; 1=Less often or never

How do managers use social media platforms?

Figure 2.2 show to what extent public managers utilize social media tools for different purposes. Each bar represents the percentage of public managers that utilize a given social media platform for a specific purpose. The percentage is from the total number of public managers who utilize that specific tool. A vast majority of public managers utilize different social media tools for disseminating information. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are also widely utilized to encourage public participation. Less than 40% of public managers utilizes social media tools for collecting input on policy planning or feedback on public services.

Figure 2.2. Social media use purposes among public managers
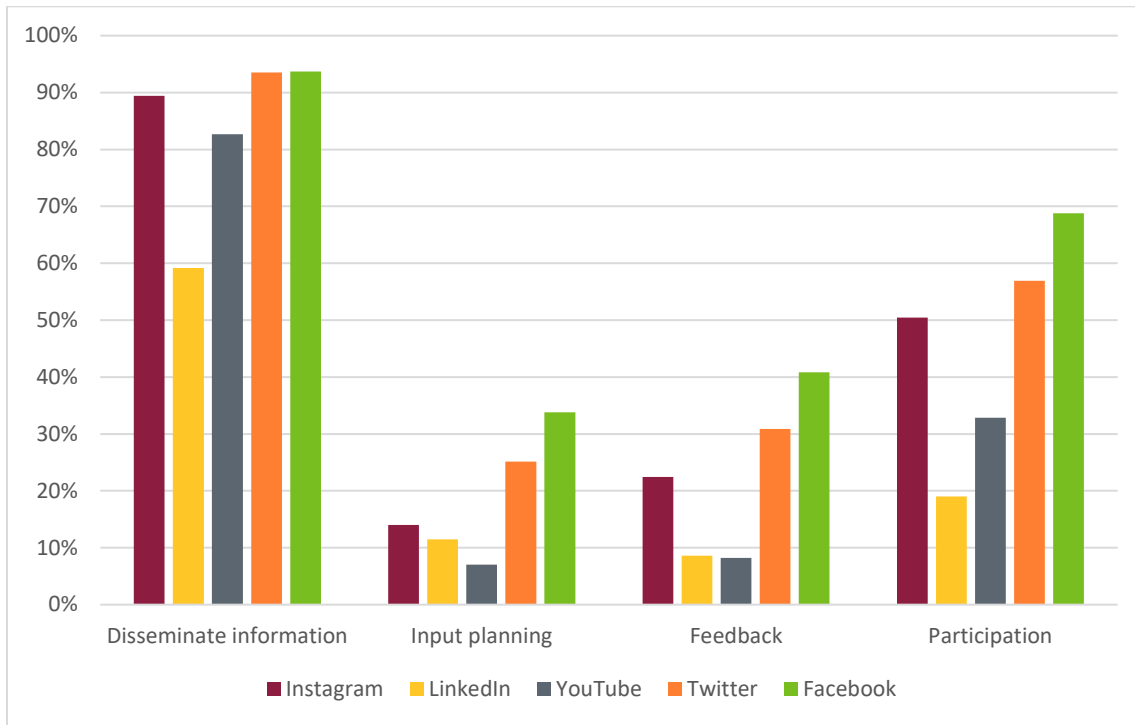
What other technology tools do municipal department heads use in their daily activities?

We also investigate other technology tools that managers might use to engage with citizens, collect citizen input, and coordinate joint activities (Desouza & Bhagwatwar, 2014; Ertiö, 2015). **Table 2.2** shows that public managers sporadically use tools such as wikis, electronic pools during face-to-face meetings, or crowdsourcing apps and tools. Public managers use tools such as apps for civic engagement, online newsletters, and online discussion forums at least once a month.

Table 2.2. Other technological tools and platforms – Mean frequency of use

Technology type	Frequency (mean)
Blogs	1.84
Online discussions forum	2.03
Online newsletters	2.50
Audio webcasts and podcasts	1.84
Web surveys or polls to gauge public opinion	1.75
Wikis	1.19
Electronic polling during face-to-face meetings	1.17
Apps for civic engagement (e.g. Nextdoor, Open City Hall, City Voice App)	2.74
Crowdsourcing apps or tools	1.31

6=Daily or almost daily; **5**=Several times a week; **4**=About once per week; **3**=About once every two weeks; 2=About monthly; 1=Less often or neve**r**

As noted in **Table 2.3** Most public managers also utilize document collaboration tools (51%), such as Google Docs; work coordination tools (58%), such as shared calendars; and file sharing tools (76%), such as Drobox or Google Drive. Among those who use these tools, a vast majority use them to work with other departments in the same city (>80%) and to work with for profit organizations (35-52%). Fewer few managers use these tools to share, coordinate, and collaborate with the federal (12-13%) and state governments (18-20%).

Table 2.3. Technology tools used for sharing, coordinating, and collaborating with external and internal stakeholders

	File Sharing	Work Coordination	Doc. Collaboration
Nonprofit orgs.	30%	25%	29%
For profit orgs.	52%	36%	35%
City depts.	87%	91%	91%
County gov.	32%	31%	30%
State gov.	20%	19%	18%
Federal gov.	13%	12%	12%

How do managers view the potential outcomes of social media platforms?

Figure 2.3 illustrates managers' level of agreement with statements about social media use and its effects in the workplace. A clear majority of respondents (83%) "agree" or "strongly agree" that "social media tools enhance knowledge exchange in my organization" or that "social media tools increase the exchange of useful information in my organization" (82%). However, managers also mostly "strongly disagree" or "disagree" that using social media makes their organization more efficient (68%).

Figure 2.3. The effects of social media in the workplace

Do department heads use social media accounts for personal or professional purposes?

One-third of respondents have at least one personal social media account. The most common type of social media used by respondents is Facebook (68%) followed by Twitter (39%). Among those who use social media, 22% report having two social media accounts and another 22% having three accounts. **Table 2.4** reports how many respondents utilize Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, and how frequently they utilize them. We also asked respondents the proportion of their posts on social media accounts that are personal or work related. The scale ranges from -10 if all posts are personal in nature to +10 if all posts are work-related. Results reported in the last column of **Table 2.3** show that, on average, respondents use social media for personal purposes. Twitter is the social media that it is the least used for personal purposes.

Table 2.4. Personal social media accounts of public managers

Social media accounts	No	Yes	Frequency	Personal or professional use
Twitter	368(61%)	234(39%)	2.46	-3.87
Facebook	191(32%)	411(68%)	2.89	-6.91
Instagram	403(67%)	199(33%)	2.27	-8.09

5=Several times an hour; 4 = Several times a day; 3= About once a day; 2= Every few days; 1 = Rarely

Do public organizations have the capacity to manage new technology tools?

Around 40% of the respondents "strongly agree" or "agree" that their departments lack the capacity to utilize technology efficiently. They agree that management lacks software applications that would make work more efficient (38%), there is a mismatch between the departments' needs and what technology can provide (36%), and their agencies are too busy to effectively monitor, control, and use the data they collect (39%). However, only 13% of respondents agree or strongly agree that their agency is ill equipped to manage important questions about online security and privacy. Results are summarized in **Figure 2.4**.

Overall, our survey shows that while respondents agree technology can be useful for their work activities, there are gaps between their needs and skills and the technology capacity of their organization.

Figure 2.4. Level of agreement about organizational technology use
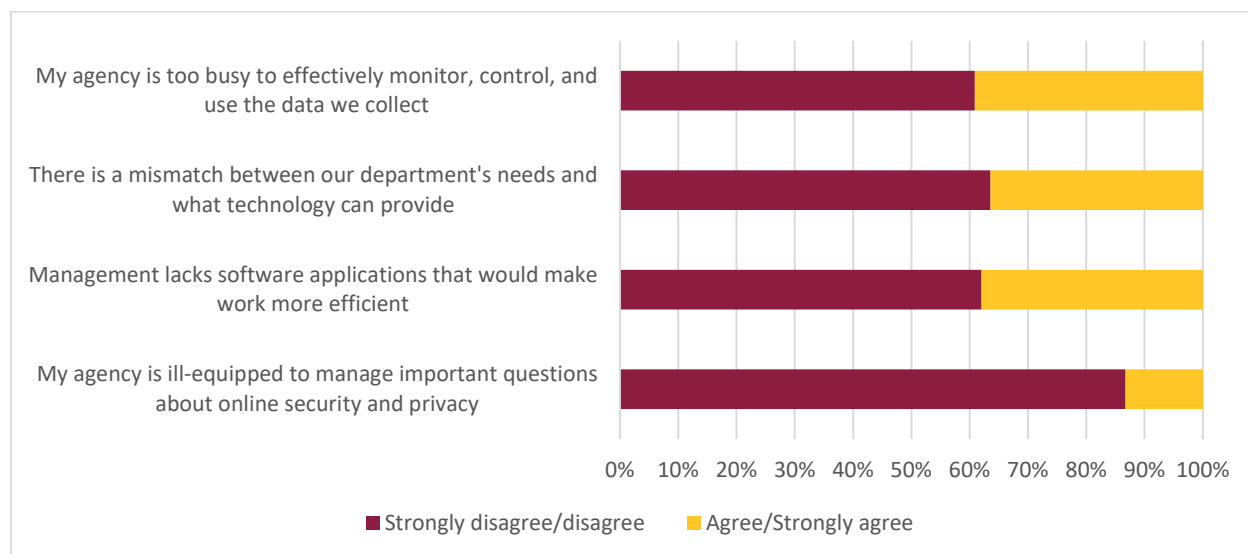
Are city governments struggling with cybersecurity and information disclosure?

Table 2.5 shows that a majority of respondents report that their organization has not experienced – in the past 12 months – an unauthorized disclosure of information to media (79%), politicians or other key public officials (79%), citizens or other community groups (77%), as well as no unintended or accidental electronic disclosure of organization information (73%).

However, one-third of respondents report that there has been an attempted security breach where an external organization has sought to access electronic files or data. In very few cases these cyber-attacks have resulted in a ransom demand (5%) or disruption of agency services and activities (9%).

Table 2.5. Unintended disclosure of information and cybersecurity events in the past 12 months

	No	Yes	I don't know
Unintended or accidental electronic disclosure of organization information (such as through email or on the website)	450(73%)	45(7%)	121(20%)
Unauthorized disclosure of information to media	487(79%)	33(5%)	94(15%)
Unauthorized disclosure of information to politicians or other key public officials	483(79%)	22(4%)	106(17%)
Unauthorized disclosure of information to citizens or other community groups	472(77%)	29(5%)	115(19%)
An attempted security breach in which an external organization sought to access your electronic files or data (e.g. hacking)	242(39%)	200(32%)	174(28%)
Ransom demand following a cyber security attack	464(75%)	28(5%)	123(20%)
Disruption of agency services and activities due to a cyber security attack	454(74%)	58(9%)	104(17%)

Part III. **Open Data**

This section captures perceptions and other findings related to open data. Open data refers to data that are openly and freely accessible online (Attard, Orlandi, Scerri, & Auer, 2015; Janssen, Charalabidis, & Zuiderwijk, 2012). Cities are increasingly using open data portals to provide public access to government data. Many governments have established open data portals in response to demands for government transparency. Data portals can include a range of datasets including maps, tabular data, utilities information, crime data, and permit and licensing data.

How comfortable are managers with open data portals?

Cities use data portals to share a variety of types of data with the public. We asked respondents to indicate their level of comfort with different types of data being shared in data portals. On average, respondents were most comfortable with sharing health and safety records of local restaurant (63.5%) and least comfortable with sharing performance of individual teachers at local schools (16.4%). **Table 3.1** shows responses about different types of data by department type[1]. Reported percentages include all department heads stating that they are "very comfortable" or "somewhat comfortable" in providing the different types of open data[2].

Table 3.1. Comfortable with open data portals by data type and city department

	Mayor's Office	Parks and recreation	Finance	Community development	Police
Real estate transactions online	87%	82%	86%	80%	77%
Criminal record of individual citizens online	54%	43%	50%	58%	53%
Performance of individual teachers at local schools	47%	38%	45%	50%	60%
Police use-of-force	68%	63%	59%	59%	76%
Health and safety records of local restaurants	90%	92%	95%	92%	95%
Employee salary and benefits	93%	67%	74%	76%	81%

Percent of "very comfortable" and "somewhat comfortable"

---

[1] A series of chi-square tests confirm that there are significant differences in how local managers across different departments perceive in providing real estate data, teacher evaluation data, police use of force, and employee salary and benefits. We do not find differences in providing local restaurants' health and safety and criminal records of individual citizens.

[2] Response categories include: "Very comfortable", "Somewhat comfortable", "Somewhat uncomfortable", and "Very comfortable".

What are the benefits of open data provision?

Advocates of open data note that public access to government data can lead to better informed citizens, advance innovation and entrepreneurship in cities, increase public engagement, and ensure better oversight over government activities. We asked respondents about their views of the potential benefits of open data efforts. Overall, more than half of respondents believe that open data are "not much" or "not at all" helpful to produce any of the outcomes reported in **Table 3.2.** Very few departments heads report that government open data are "very helpful" and contribute to the listed outcomes. Department heads consider the creation of new business and services the most likely outcomes from open data portals, as one-third of department heads reports that open data are "very" or "somewhat" helpful to achieve this outcome. More than three-quarters of respondents believe that open data are "not much" or "not at all" helpful in providing the public with greater ability to monitor government performance (87.5%) or making government officials more accountable to the public (86.8%). Perceptions of the value of open data across respondents are more negative that perceptions reported by citizens in a study conducted by Pew Research (2014) which found that half of interviewed citizens agreed that open data makes government officials more accountable to the public or allows citizens to have more impact on government affairs[3].

Table 3.2. Potential outcomes of government open data efforts

	A lot	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all	I don't know
Creating new business products and services	8%	21%	39%	11%	21%
Enabling nonprofits to serve the community	6%	20%	43%	16%	15%
Facilitating citizen involvement in public affairs	3%	9%	49%	33%	6%
Allowing journalists to cover government activities more thoroughly	2%	10%	47%	34%	8%
Providing the public with greater ability to monitor government performance	2%	6%	48%	39%	5%
Making government officials more accountable to the public	1%	8%	48%	39%	4%

Questionnaire item: How much, if at all, does open data provided by the government help with the following?

---

[3] Details on the Pew Research survey can be found here at page 4: http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2014/10/PI_OpenData_072815.pdf

Part IV: <u>Organizational Culture & Volunteering</u>

This section reports the data on work life and demographic features of respondents. Topics include respondent views on organizational values, organizational identity, and volunteer activities and descriptive results on education, race, work history, and job tenure.

Should government organizations represent community diversity?

The survey uses a number of items to assess the extent to which local government managers agree that the bureaucracy should represent the racial and ethnic background of the community they serve. **Table 4.1** reports the level of agreement with statements about representation. 97% of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that bureaucrats in government agencies are responsible for representing the interests and needs of all racial and ethnic groups; over half (73%) "agree" or "strongly agree" that bureaucracy should have roughly the same racial or ethnic background as the population as a whole. Alternatively, 80% of managers "strongly disagree" or "disagree" that people are best represented in politics by leaders of their own racial or ethnic background.

**Table 4.1. Representative Bureaucracy**
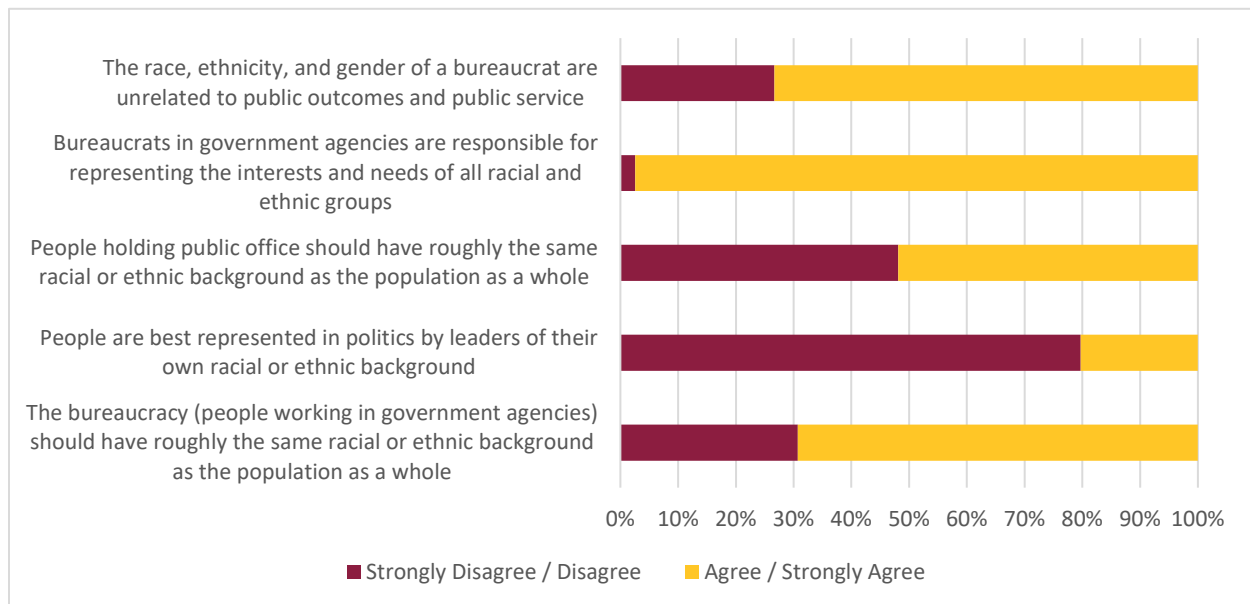
How do municipal managers describe their organization's identity?

Organizational identity orientation (OIO) is a construct that draws from social psychology and organizational behavior. OIO refers to the organization's identity as related to its stakeholders as perceived by the organizational members (Brickson 2005, 2007). Questions of organizational

identity orientation categorize organizations as independent entities (individualistic), dyadically interdependent partners (relational) or as group members (collectivistic) (Brickson, 2005) and are determined by how organizational members define themselves, compare themselves to others, and define their motives and values (Brickson, 2000). The questionnaire items used in this survey were developed by Langer (2007) in her dissertation, which empirically operationalizes concepts previously measured through qualitative work (Brickson 2000, 2005, 2007).

Table 4.2 outlines responses to a set of items asking people about their organization. Respondents were asked to consider a set of descriptors about their organization and indicate if the statement is not at all, not very, somewhat, very much, or completely like their organization (or department). Overall, respondents from the mayor's office, parks & recreation, and finance were reported that their organizations completely and very much described as "warm" (relational) and extremely motivated to advance the welfare of a broader community or cause (collectivistic). Those in community development and police departments also indicated that their organizations are very much or completely described as "motivated to connect with others in a close and personal way" (relational).

Table 4.2. Organizational identity, by department type

	Mayor's Office	Parks & Recreation	Finance	Community Development	Police
Can be described as unique and unlike any other	73%	72%	73%	75%	74%
Can be described as cause-driven	78%	75%	70%	74%	83%
Can be described as warm	**91%**	**80%**	**82%**	84%	74%
Is extremely motivated to advance the welfare of a broader community or cause	**91%**	**90%**	**84%**	**86%**	**88%**
Is extremely motivated to outshine other similar organizations	78%	77%	74%	76%	83%
Is extremely motivated to connect with others in a close and personal way	80%	69%	64%	**85%**	**88%**

Questionnaire item: Organizations can be described in a variety of ways. Considering the following descriptors, please indicate if the statement is not at all, not very, somewhat, very much, or completely like your organization (or department). Percentages reported are "very much" and "completely" combined.

What are the volunteering patterns for municipal department heads?

Volunteering is defined as activities that are not required and which are not paid, but that involve giving of your time and skills. On average, respondents volunteer 3 hours in a typical week. Respondents volunteer in a variety of organizations. The most common volunteer outlets are social or community service groups (58%), religious organizations (38%), youth organizations (30%), and education organizations (28%). Nearly half (49%) of respondents indicate that their workplace sponsors a volunteer activity for employees.

How many years have respondents worked in the public, private, and non-profit sectors?

The survey captures data on respondent work experience in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. **Figure 4.1** illustrates the number of years of experience respondents have in the public sector; the average job tenure is 24 years.

Figure 4.1. Number of years of experience in public sector
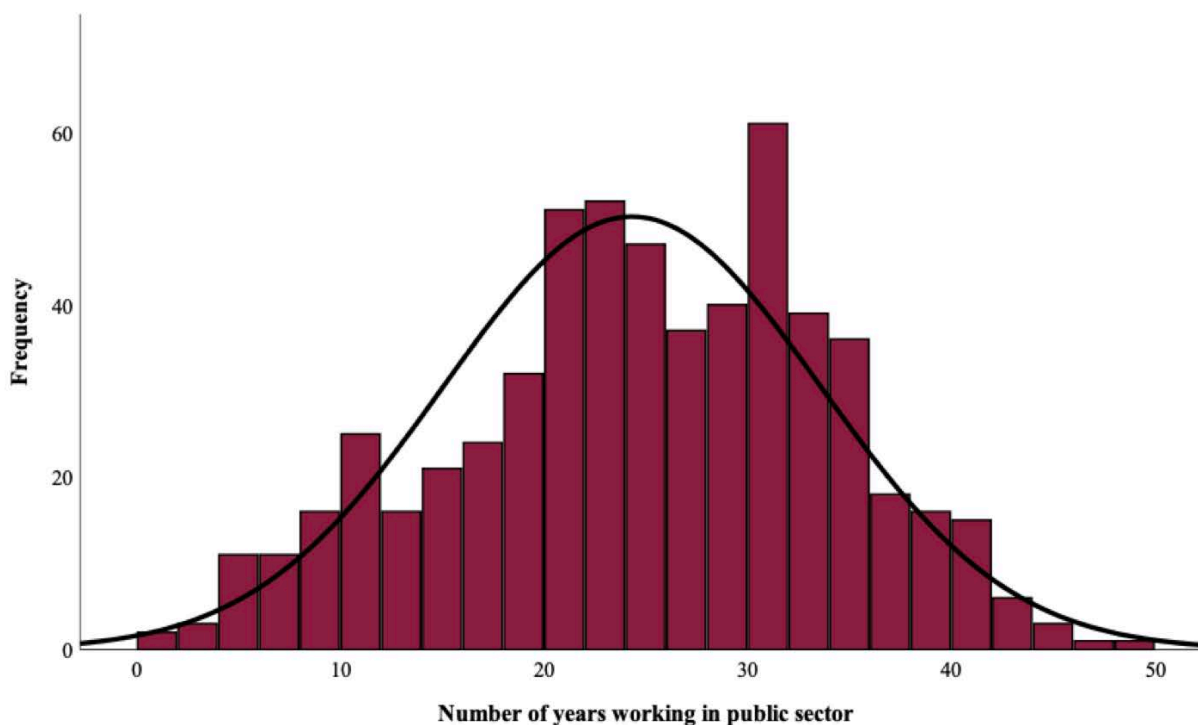
Among respondents, 22% have worked in the nonprofit sector and 26% have previously worked in the for-profit, private sector. Among respondents, work experience in the non-profit sector ranges from 1 year to 42 years, with a mean of 3 years. Private sector work experience ranges from 1 year to 42 years with a mean of 6 years. **Table 4.3** shows that many respondents worked less

than 10 years in both the non-profit and private sector, with the majority of respondents (54%) indicating that they worked less than ten years in the private sector.

Table 4.3. Number of years of experience in the non-profit or private sector

	Years working for non-profit sector	**Years working for private sector**
Under 10 Years	105 (35%)	45 (15%)
10 - 19 Years	18 (6%)	94 (32%)
20 - 29 Years	9 (3%)	16 (5%)
30 - 39 Years	4 (1%)	5 (2%)
40 - 47 Years	1 (<1%)	1 (<1%)

How do respondents perceive organizational innovation, risk, and uncertainty?

Effective city government and management requires innovation, risk taking, and organizational environment. To get an understanding of how municipal department heads deal with these challenges, we ask respondents to indicate their views of organizational innovation, risk, and work environment. **Figure 4.2** shows that most respondents report that their organization has a strong commitment to innovation and that people that develop innovative solutions to problems are rewarded (81%).

Figure 4.2. Respondent reports on organizational innovation
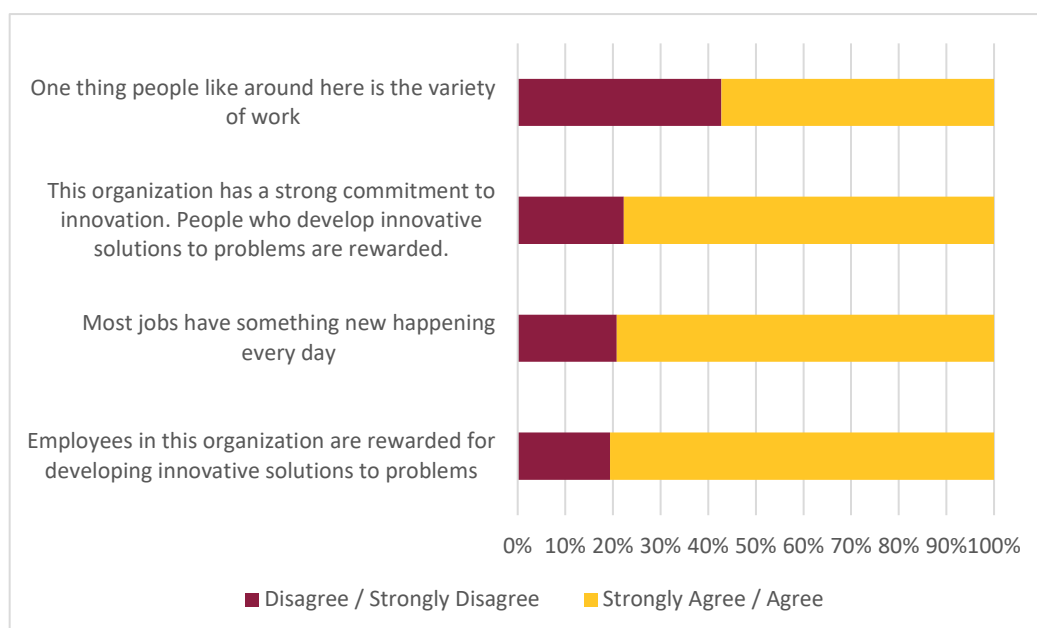
Figure 4.3 illustrates manager responses on statements about. On average, more than half of the respondents "strongly agree" or "agree" that employees are not afraid to take risks (92%). Respondents indicate that they "strongly disagree" or "disagree" that a person who wants to make her or his own decisions would be quickly discouraged in the agency (90%).

Figure 4.3. Respondent reports on risk and organizational structure
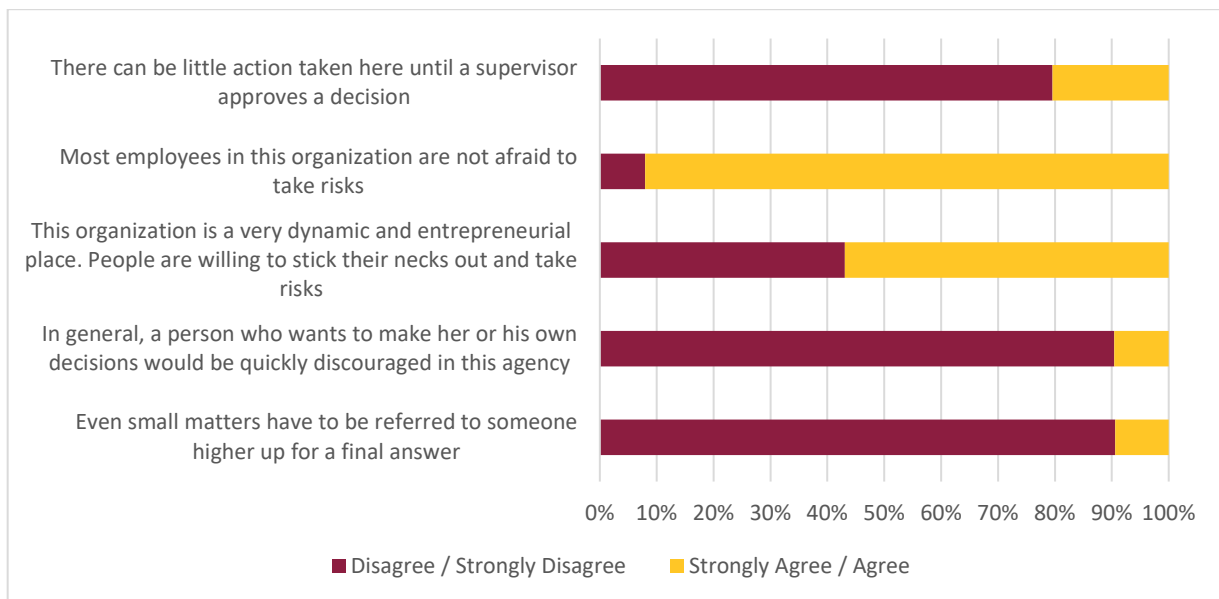
Conclusions

The purpose of this report is to describe the status of public participation, technology, open, and organizational culture and volunteering in local governments in the United States. The report presents findings from a 2018 national survey of 500 local governments on public participation, technology use, data sharing, and work life, across five departments: Mayor's office, finance, police, parks and recreation, and community development.

Overall, our findings show that local government managers believe in the positive impact of citizen participation and most of them actively engage with individual citizens and civil society groups, especially for getting feedback on service quality. Local governments are also active users of new technologies, such as Facebook and Twitter, and sharing tools such as Dropbox. Respondents report using social media platforms, but more for personal than professional purposes.

Results from this survey are part of a long-term research interest cultivated by the Center for Science, Technology and Environmental Policy Studies at ASU in understanding the relationships between technology and civic engagement in local governments. Since the first national survey was administered in 2010, we observed a continuous increase in the number of features that cities provide on their website, as well as an increase use of social media and other technological tools. We also find positive perceptions of benefits derived from technology use have increased over time, but there is increased skepticism about using social media and open data portals to increase public outcomes and advance public engagement.

This long-term, multi-year study would not be possible without the continued support and participation of local government managers who have taken time to respond to our survey over the past six years. Without their help, we would not be able to pursue this research, train students, and advance knowledge and practice in this area. We hope that this report will provide useful implications for local government managers and their colleagues. We invite them to visit our website (www.csteps.asu.edu) to access more detailed reports on these data including policy memos, academic papers, and dissertations.

References

American Association for Public Opinion Research, 2016. Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys. http://www.aapor.org/AAPOR_Main/media/publications/Standard-Definitions20169theditionfinal.pdf (accessed 01.02.2017).

Brickson, S. (2000). The impact of identity orientation on individual and organizational outcomes in demographically diverse settings. Academy of management Review, 25(1), 82-101.

Brickson, S. L. (2002). Organizational Identity Orientation: Making the Link between Organizational Identity and Organizational Behavior (Doctoral Dissertation) Retrieved from DATABASE NAME (ACCESSION NUMBER)

Brickson, S. L. (2005). Organizational identity orientation: Forging a link between organizational identity and organizations' relations with stakeholders. Administrative Science Quarterly, 50(4), 576-609.

Brickson, S. L. (2007). Organizational identity orientation: The genesis of the role of the firm and distinct forms of social value. Academy of Management Review, 32(3), 864-888.

Handley, D. M., & Howell-Moroney, M. (2010). Ordering stakeholder relationships and citizen participation: Evidence from the community development block grant program. *Public Administration Review*, *70*(4), 601–609.

Irvin, R. A., & Stansbury, J. (2004). Citizen participation in decision making: Is it worth the effort? *Public Administration Review*, *64*(1), 55–65.

Langer, J. A. (2018). Organizational Identity and The Nature of Stakeholder Relationships in the Blended Age of Organizing. University of Illinois at Chicago, Dissertation. http://hdl.handle.net/10027/22718

Peters, B. G. (2001). *The future of governing*. University Press of Kansas.

Roberts, N. (2004). Public deliberation in an age of direct citizen participation. *The American Review of Public Administration*, *34*(4), 315–353.

Scott, J. K. (2006). "E" the People: Do U.S. Municipal Government Web Sites Support Public Involvement? *Public Administration Review*, *66*(3), 341–353.

Welch, E. W., Feeney, M. K., & Park, C. H. (2016). Determinants of data sharing in U.S. city governments. *Government Information Quarterly*, *33*(3), 393–403. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2016.07.002

Yang, K., & Callahan, K. (2007). Citizen Involvement Efforts and Bureaucratic Responsiveness: Participatory Values, Stakeholder Pressures, and Administrative Practicality. *Public Administration Review*, *67*(2), 249–264.

Appendix 1. Survey Implementation, Response Rate, and Response Bias

The survey was released on April 18, 2018 and closed on August 7, 2018; open for about four months. The respondent waves were evenly split into three groups, based on the date they completed the survey. Table 1 displays the duration of each wave and the number of respondents that completed the survey.

Table A1.1. Distribution of respondents across three survey waves

Wave	Duration	Number of respondents
Wave 1	Apr. 18-May 23, 2018	465
Wave 2	May 24-Jun. 27, 2018	104
Wave 3	Jun. 28-Aug. 7, 2018	52

Respondents in the three waves are not significantly different by department type or gender. In relation to the type of government, the pairwise comparisons show significant differences between the first and third wave: significantly more respondents in the first wave come from a Council-Manager government.

The survey was closed on August 7, 2018 with 590 complete responses, 31 partials of which 24 were retained, 23 known refusals, and 240 email addresses confirmed as unreachable. Table A1.2. shows the final response rate.

Response rate

From the initial sample 54 cases have been removed. The following is the adjusted sample to reflect the changes:

- based on emails and phone calls we found that 20 individuals in the sample had retired;
- based on emails and phone calls we found that 31 individuals in the sample were no longer in the position;
- based on emails and phone calls we found that 3 individuals were ineligible from the sample. 3 of the individuals are on leave.

Table A1.2. Respondent Rate Monitoring

Survey Administration	1-Jun 2018	21-Jun 2018	23-Jul 2018	3-Aug 2018

Sample	2475			
Left Position	18	26	27	34
Bad Email Address*	198	202	205	243
Total Retired	10	14	15	20
Adjusted Sample	**2249**	**2233**	**2228**	**2178**
Total Refusals	16	17	21	23
Partials	187	240	263	31
Completed	461	522	550	590
Response Rate	**20.50%**	**23.38%**	**24.69%**	**27.09%**

*Bad email addresses were determined by undeliverable emails that bounced back with 3 e-mails.

The Table A1.3 shows the calculation of the incomplete responses.

Table A1.3. Incomplete response rate monitoring

Survey Administration	31-July 2018
Individuals dropped due to break off	240
Total Incomplete	**240**

AAPOR sample size

The following shows the calculation of the response rate according to the standards established by the American Association of Public Opinion Research.

We consider:

- among Category 2, we counted participants who had formally refused to participate to the survey (2.1120) and those who implicitly refused as they did not reply to the email, neither complete the survey (2.1130);
- undelivered e-mail addresses have been placed in the "Unknown eligibility" category (3.30);
- the "Out of sample" category includes those individuals who did not have an email address or who we discovered were no longer working in the position, on leave, or had retired (4.1).

Table A1.4. Incomplete response rate monitoring

1. Eligible interview		
1	Complete	590
1.2	Partials retained	31

2. Eligible non interview		
2.112	Known-respondent refusals	23
2.12	Break off / Implicit refusal	240

3. Unknown eligibility		
3.19	Nothing returned	1294
3.3	Mail returned undelivered	243

4. Not eligible		
4.1	Out of sample	54

Table A1.5. AAPOR Response rates

Response rate 1	0.244

Response rate 2	0.257
Response rate 3*	0.253
Response rate 4*	0.266
Cooperation rate 1	0.667
Cooperation rate 2	0.702
Refusal rate 1	0.109
Contact rate 1	0.365
Contact rate 3	1

*Estimate proportion of cases of unknown eligibility that are eligible: 0.941

Source: Response rate calculation V3.1 – American Association for Public Opinion Researcher

Appendix 2. Methodology

The national web-based survey of local governments was conducted by CSTEPS at the ASU between April 18, 2018 to August 7, 2018. The survey instrument, developed by Dr. Mary Feeney ad Dr. Eric Welch was designed to collect data on the types of activities in which the public engages, the utilization of Internet-based technology by the organizations, manager perceptions about technology and eGovernment use, as well as organizational factors.

The survey was administered to government managers in 500 local governments with citizen populations ranging from 25,000 to 250,000. The breakdown of cities by population is highly skewed to smaller cities (50%), with only 16% of cities being 100K-250K. Because larger cities tend to have more capacity for eGovernment and ICT use and there are fewer cities in these population ranges, we elected to do a census of the larger communities (100K-250K) and drew a proportional sample for the cities 25K-100K. The census of cities with a population 100K-250K resulted in 184 cities. For the remaining 316 cities, a proportional sample with 59% of the sample was drawn from 25K-50K, 28% from 50-75K, and 13% from cities 75K-100K.

Tables A2.1 and A2.2. below show the number and percent of responses by city size and department type. As noted in Table A2.1, the 36% of respondents are from smaller towns with a population less than 49,999. Another 18% are in cities with a population from 50,000 to 74,999. The lowest response rate came from respondents who work in the Mayor's office (16%), while respondents in Police departments (20%), Community Development departments (24%), and Parks and Recreation departments (20%) each account for slightly more than one fifth of responses.

Table A2.1. Number and percent of responses by population size

Population	Frequency	Percent
Less than 49,999	222	35.8
50,000 thru 74,999	111	17.9
75,000 thru 99,999	42	12.8
100,000 thru 124,999	80	8.5
125,000 thru 149,999	52	6.7
150,000 thru 174,000	29	5.9
175,000 thru 199,999	37	4.6
200,000 thru 124,999	23	4.0
225,000 thru 250,000	25	3.7
Total	**621**	**100**

Table A2.2. Number and percent of responses by department type

Department Type	Frequency	Percent
Mayor's Office	99	16.0
Community Development	151	24.3
Finance	121	19.5
Parks & Recreation	123	19.8
Police	126	20.3
Total	**620**	**100**

Appendix 3. Questionnaire Items and Response Categories for the Survey Questions Presented in the Report

Please think about your department (e.g. Finance, Parks & Rec, Police) or office (e.g. Mayor's office) when responding to these questions about your organization.

Part I: Participation

We would like to ask you some questions about your organization's interaction with the public. Stakeholders include organizations and individuals outside your organization including local community organizations, nonprofit or educational groups, or other government agencies. Participation is defined as the process in which citizens and external stakeholders take part in agency decisions.

Over the last year, how often did the following citizens and stakeholder groups participate in your organization's decision and policy making?

1   Federal government agencies/employees/officials
2   Governor's office
3   State legislators
4   Mayor's office
5   Other city departments
6   Internal department staff
7   Consultants or paid experts
8   News media
9   Professional associations
10   Interest groups
11   Religious groups
12   Nonprofit human service organizations
13   Neighborhood associations
14   Individual citizens

Answer options:
1   Very Often
2   Often
3   Sometimes
4   Rarely
5   Never
6   Don't Know

Over the last year, how often did members of the public contribute the following to your organization?

1   Input on long range plans
2   Input on service priorities

3   Feedback on service quality
4   Formal oversight of your organization
5   Feedback on department decisions
6   Input on improving department management and operations
7   Input on employee conduct

Answer options:
1   Very Often
2   Often
3   Sometimes
4   Rarely
5   Never
6   Don't Know

Part II. Technology in your organization

We would like to ask you some questions about your organization's use of technology. As a reminder, please think about your department (e.g. Finance, Parks & Rec, Police) or office (e.g. Mayor's Office) when responding to these questions about your organization.

Which of the following tools do people in your organization use for work purposes? (Please check all that apply).

1   Facebook
2   Twitter
3   YouTube
4   LinkedIn
5   Instagram

Answer options:
1   Yes
2   No

About how frequently do people in your organization use the following tools for <u>work purposes</u>?

1   Facebook
2   Twitter
3   YouTube
4   LinkedIn
5   Instagram

Answer options:
1   Daily or almost daily
2   Several times a week
3   About once per week
4   About once every two weeks

5   About monthly
6   Less often

For what purposes does your organization use the types of tools that you named? (Please check all that apply).

1   Facebook
2   Twitter
3   YouTube
4   LinkedIn
5   Instagram

Answer options:
1   To disseminate information externally
2   To receive input on planning and policies
3   To get feedback on service quality
4   To facilitate participation by citizens

On average, how frequently do people in your organization use the following media tools for work purposes?

1   Blogs
2   Online discussion forums
3   Online newsletters
3   Audio webcasts and podcasts
5   Web surveys and polls to gauge public opinion
6   Wikis
7   Electronic polling during face-to-face meetings
8   Apps for civic engagement (e.g. Nextdoor, Open City Hall, City Voice App)
9   Crowdsourcing apps or tools

Answer options:
1   Daily or almost daily
2   Several times a week
3   About once per week
4   About once every two weeks
5   About monthly
6   Less often

Which of the following tools does your organizations use for work? (Please check all that apply.)

1   Document collaboration tools (e.g. Google Docs, Wikis)
2   Work coordination tools (e.g. Google Calendar, MS Project, Slack)
3   File sharing tools (e.g. Dropbox, Google Drive, Box.com)

Answer options:
1   Yes
2   No

With which of the following organizations and stakeholders do you use the tools you identified?

1   Document collaboration tools (e.g. Google Docs, Wikis)
2   Work coordination tools (e.g. Google Calendar, MS Project, Slack)
3   File sharing tools (e.g. Dropbox, Google Drive, Box.com)

Answer options
1   Nonprofit organizations
2   Private for profit organizations (e.g. consultants)
3   Other city departments
4   County government
5   State government
6   Federal government

Now we will ask a few questions about using social media for personal purposes.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about social media use in organizations.

1   Social media tools enhance knowledge exchange in my organization
2   Social media tools improve my organization's work
3   Social media use tends to waste time
5   Using social media makes my organization more efficient
6   The benefit of social media tools in the workplace is highly overrated
7   Social media tools increase the exchange of useful information in my organization

Answer options:
1   Strongly disagree
2   Disagree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Agree
5   Strongly agree

Now we will ask a few questions about using social media for personal purposes.

Please indicate if you have any of the following personal social media accounts (Please check all that apply.)
1   Twitter
2   Facebook
3   Instagram

Answer options
1   Yes
2   No

During a typical work week, how often do you check your personal social media accounts?

1   Twitter
2   Facebook
3   Instagram

Answer options
1   Several times an hour
2   Several times a day
3   About once a day
4   Every few days
5   Rarely

Considering the social media platforms for which you have personal accounts, please indicate the portion of your posts that are personal vs posts that are professional or work-related.

1   Twitter
2   Facebook
3   Instagram

Answer options
1   Personal 100%
2   Professional 100%

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

1   My agency is ill-equipped to manage important questions about online security and privacy
2   Management lacks software applications that would make work more efficient
3   There is a mismatch between our department's needs and what technology can provide
4   My agency is too busy to effectively monitor, control, and use the data we collect

Answer options:
1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree

During the last 12 months, has your organization experienced any of the following?

1	Unintended or accidental electronic disclosure of organization information (such as through email or on the website)
2	Unauthorized disclosure of information to media
3	Unauthorized disclosure of information to politicians or other key public official
4	Unauthorized disclosure of information to citizens or other community groups
5	An attempted security breach in which an external organization sought to access your electronic files or data (e.g. hacking)
6	Ransom demand following a cyber security attack
7	Disruption of agency services and activities due to a cyber security attack

Answer options

1   Yes
2   No
3   Don't know

Part III: Open Data

Open data portals give the public open access to government data. Many governments have established open data portals in response to demands for government transparency. Data portals can include a range of datasets including maps, tabular data, utilities information, crime data, and permit and licensing data.

How comfortable are you with government publicly providing data about:

1   Real estate transactions online
2   Criminal records of individual citizens online
3   The performance of individual teachers at local schools online
4   Mortgages of individual homeowners online
5   The health and safety records of local restaurants online
6   Employee salaries and benefits

Answer options:
1   Very comfortable
2   Somewhat comfortable
3   Somewhat uncomfortable
4   Very uncomfortable

Open data are data available to the public in an open access format online.

How much, if at all, does open data provided by the government help with the following?

1   Creating new business products and services
2   Enabling nonprofits to serve the community
3   Facilitating citizen involvement in public affairs
4   Allowing journalists to cover government activities more thoroughly

5   Providing the public with greater ability to monitor government performance
6   Making government officials more accountable to the public

Answer options
1   A lot
2   Somewhat
3   Not much
4   Not at all
5   Don't know

Part IV: Department & Work Environment

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements:

1   The bureaucracy (people working in government agencies) should have roughly the same racial or ethnic background as the population as a whole.
2   People are best represented in politics by leaders of their own racial or ethnic background.
3   People holding public office should have roughly the same racial or ethnic background as the population as a whole.
4   Bureaucrats in government agencies are responsible for representing the interests and needs of all racial and ethnic groups.
5   The race, ethnicity, and gender of a bureaucrat is unrelated to public outcomes and public service.

Answer options:
1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements:

1   Employees in this organization are rewarded for developing innovative solutions to problems
2   Most jobs have something new happening every day
3   Even small matters have to be referred to someone higher up for a final answer
4   This organization has a strong commitment to innovation. People who develop innovative solutions to problems are rewarded
5   In general, a person who wants to make her or his own decisions would be quickly discouraged in this agency
6   This organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks
7   Most employees in this organization are not afraid to take risks

8	One thing people like around here is the variety of work
9	There can be little action taken here until a supervisor approves a decision
10	People here do the same job in the same way every day
11	Top management exerts strong control over this organization

Answer options:

1	Strongly agree
2	Agree
3	Neither agree nor disagree
4	Disagree
5	Strongly disagree

Organizations can be described in a variety of ways. Considering the following descriptors, please indicate if the statement is not at all, not very, somewhat, very much, or completely like your organization (or department):

1	Can be described as unique and unlike any other
2	Can be described as cause-driven
3	Can be described as warm
4	Is extremely motivated to advance the welfare of a broader community or cause
5	Is extremely motivated to outshine other similar organizations
6	Is extremely motivated to connect with others in a close and personal way

Answer options:

1	Not at all like my organization
2	Not very much like my organization
3	Somewhat like my organization
4	Very much like my organization

Volunteering is defined as activities that are not required and which are not paid, but that involved giving of your time and skills. In a typical week, about how many hours do you engage in unpaid volunteer activities for an organization?

Answer options:

1	# of Hours

Please indicate what types of organizations you volunteered for in the last year [check all that apply]

Answer options:

1	Religious org
2	Social or community service groups
3	Civic organization, political party or advocacy group
4	Youth educational group
5	Hospital, clinic, healthcare, or health education org
6	Public safety
7	Immigrant/refugee assistance
8	Sports or hobby group

9   Cultural or arts org
10   Environmental or animal care group
11   Labor union, business, or professional organization

Does your workplace sponsor a volunteer activity for employees?

Answer options:
1   Yes
2   No
3   I don't know

Please indicate the number of years of experience you have working in each of following sectors, if at all.

1   Public sector
2   Non-profit sector
3   Private sector

Answer options:
1   # of Years

bioeconomy policy

social and
human capital

innovation dynamics

digital government

r & d evaluation

transit and mobility

CSTEPS_ASU | csteps.asu.edu

411 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004