Smaller U.S. Cities Top Smart City Report Card

Smaller Cities far better positioned for future of smart, sustainable cities according to "Leading Cities Rating powered by Bright Cities"

Following the preview of the Leading Cities Rating powered by Bright Cities shared at the Smart City Expo Atlanta, the partnership between Leading Cities and Bright Cities has refined their research and rated 500 U.S. cities. In addition to the surprise that no U.S. city scored an A+ rating, smart city leaders globally recognized that smaller U.S. cities are better positioned to be the future of initiatives to advance resiliency and sustainability to achieve Smart Cities.

The highest rated cities, achieving an A- rating, were Centennial, Colorado; Newton, Massachusetts; Pleasanton, California; and San Ramon, California. These cities demonstrate that bigger is not always better. Though much attention globally on Smart City projects have focused on marquis cities, like New York, London, Toronto and Barcelona, these cities may not be the leaders in Smart City efforts they were once believed to be.

"This first publication of our full rating is no doubt shocking" said Michael Lake, President and CEO of Leading Cities, "but this highlights the real opportunity for Smart City solution providers to focus on the more agile, less bureaucratic partners in smaller cities. The results of this rating system are an indicator that larger cities may need to turn to their smaller counterparts to lead municipal governments into the Smart City future we need to achieve the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement's commitment to carbon reduction."

Though the United States remains the world's greatest launchpad for smart city startups, the rate of implementation among U.S. cities is far lower than adoption rates in places like Europe where the European Union has invested hundreds of billions to make its cities smarter. American cities are at a global disadvantage resulting from the lack of federal funding to support smart city solutions and infrastructure upgrades.

Earlier this year, the Smart Cities and Communities Act was reintroduced by members of both houses of Congress. A similar bill failed to pass in 2017 after stalling in committee. If passed now, the Smart Cities and Communities Act would provide approximately $200 million a year for five years to advance the implementation of smart city solutions around the country.

"Utilizing data science technology and fundamentally shifting from a ranking to a rating system provides a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges cities face as they prepare for continued urbanization, sea-level rise and achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement," said Raquel Cardamone, CEO of Bright Cities.

Combining Leading Cities' pioneering tools and network of global smart city experts with Bright Cities' innovative diagnostic technology, *The Leading Cities Rating powered by Bright Cities* represents a dramatic shift in the way we measure a city's transformation to a "smart city." This tool uses data science applied to publicly available data to analyze a city's performance against 32 indicators from ten dimensions of a smart city: Governance, Economy, Education, Entrepreneurship, Environment, Health, Mobility, Security, Technology and Urbanization. Rated cities are categorized on a scale ranging from A+ to F.

Unlike the traditional smart city rankings that have become commonplace around the world, the *Leading Cities Rating powered by Bright Cities* does not automatically assign a top score giving the public a much more accurate understanding of where a city falls on the spectrum of city "smartness." Instead, an 'ideal city' is established from compiling the highest achieved scores in each indicator, thus providing a realistic goal for all cities to achieve.

About Leading Cities

Leading Cities, an international nonprofit organization, is a global leader in Smart City solutions, city diplomacy, collaboration advancing sustainability and resilient city strategies and technologies to improve the quality of life in cities around the world. With its global network of world-class cities, Leading Cities has built tools and networks to share best practices, solutions and lessons learned among city leaders while breaking down barriers within cities by engaging each of the five sectors of the Quintuple-helix (Q-helix): Public, Private, Non-profit, Academia and Citizenry.

About Bright Cities

Bright Cities is a disruptive platform for diagnosing a city's roadmap to become a smarter city every day. Using a pioneering methodology, it gathers, analyzes and connects data from various sources to trace diagnoses about cities performances of any size and nationality in ten areas of expertise. From there, the platform establishes a roadmap, listing priority actions, schedules and budgets to improve the life quality of residents, public services and government. Through a gradual evolution, each city analyzed can become more efficient and intelligent until it is fully converted into a smart city.

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