City to launch Open Data Portal encouraging development of mobile applications

bcWORKSHOP announces The Public Agenda digital tool; mapping voting agenda

Dallas – The City of Dallas Communication & Information Services department is launching a project to deliver an Open Data Portal where constituents and any public entity can consume data for personal use or for developing mobile applications.

“This project is envisioned to deliver Web API functions for developers to subscribe or extend,” said Bill Finch, Chief Information Officer. “For the common person, the Open Data Portal will enable search and export capabilities and the technology will be open source,” added Finch.

“The City is excited at the prospect of this endeavor in generating citizen engagement and innovation while promoting government transparency and openness,” said City Manager Mary K. Suhm. The Open Data Portal is scheduled to launch this fall.

An example of the possible outcomes of Open Data goes live this afternoon with a new digital tool called The Public Agenda, developed by the buildingcommunityWORKSHOP (bcWORKSHOP), a Dallas based nonprofit community design center seeking to improve the livability and viability of communities.

The Public Agenda maps the voting agenda of the Dallas City Council by neighborhoods. The project is part of bcWORKSHOP’s POP [People Organizing Place] initiative to strengthen the social, economic, and physical health of Dallas’ neighborhoods.

“Healthy and vibrant neighborhoods are the foundation of a successful city, and every citizen should be empowered as a neighborhood and city advocate,” said Brent Brown, Director of bcWORKSHOP and the Dallas CityDesign Studio.

The Public Agenda uses the POP City Map as a framework for understanding the geography of the decisions that come before the City Council, thus organizing the Council’s public agenda by
geography and presenting items up for decision based on neighborhood. People can access the digital tool at www.thepublicagenda.bcworkshop.org.

In addition to the Open Data Portal and The Public Agenda project, the Mayor’s Office will host an Apps Challenge with partners from the corporate and academic communities. “The goal of the Apps Challenge is to highlight the innovation and creativity of local developers and entrepreneurs in Dallas,” said Mayor Rawlings.

The challenge is designed to incentivize entrepreneurs and developers to build software applications that will positively impact the quality of life for Dallas residents. The city will supply a group of open data sets for use by challenge participants that may serve as a basis for app development.

If corporations are interested in sponsoring the Mayor’s Apps Challenge, they can contact Shawn Williams, Deputy Chief of Staff at shawnp.williams@dallascityhall.com

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ABOUT bcWORKSHOP:
The buildingcommunityWORKSHOP is a Dallas based nonprofit community design center seeking to improve the livability and viability of communities through the practice of thoughtful design and making. We enrich the lives of citizens by bringing design thinking to areas of our city where resources are most scarce. To do so, the bcWORKSHOP recognizes that it must first understand the social, economic, and environmental issues facing a community before beginning work. We welcome any complaints, suggestions, or other thoughts regarding The Public Agenda. Neighborhoods have been identified through research and community engagement by bcWORKSHOP; if your neighborhood is missing or misrepresented, please contact us. The Public Agenda is an independent project of the bcWORKSHOP.