Smart Cities Committee Recap

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Mission: Seattle's citizenry and home-grown companies are well-known internationally for their innovation and technological know-how. In that spirit, the Community Technology Advisory Board (CTAB) is committed to helping The City tackle urban challenges, foster economic growth, and improve the delivery of government services through Seattle's Smart City initiatives. CTAB seeks to support the emerging work stemming from Seattle IT and other departments within the City that are working on technological solutions to improve systems and the day-to-day lives of Seattleites.

Accomplishments: This year, the Smart Cities Committee focused on researching and providing recommendations on two main topics: Police Facial Recognition and AI/IOT Management of Public Infrastructure. The committee produced the following two papers based on their research and provided them as reading material to the lawyers attending the Seeing AI Law and Policy Through Multiple Lenses Conference:

- State of Police Facial Recognition in Seattle — Report that explains the basics of facial recognition technology and its usage by the police, reviews the current laws and regulations surrounding facial recognition technology, and discusses the legal issues and technological flaws of the current facial recognition systems
- AI/IOT Management of Public Infrastructure: Considerations for Seattle — Report that explores how The City can manage the development and equitable implementation of how key 'Smart City' technologies now and in the future, with a mind to the privacy and partnership implications thereof

The Smart Cities Committee also presented an overview of Smart Cities at the Seattle Library as part of their Emerging Technology 101 Series. The presentation covered the definition and examples of Smart Cities, key technologies used, why Seattle is an interesting place to think about Smart Cities, and some open questions -- followed by attendee questions and comments.
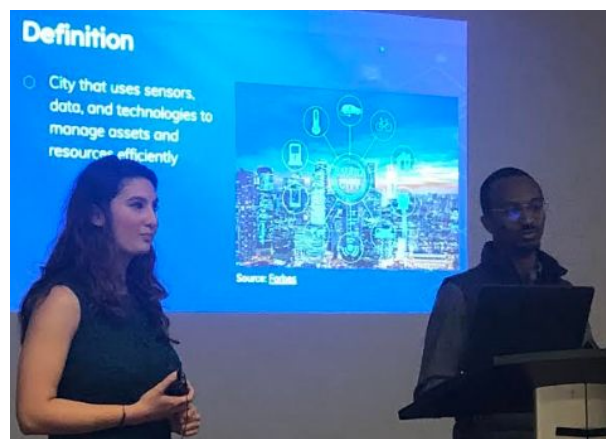
Furthermore, the Smart Cities Committee partnered with the RecTech Community Technology Lab at the Delridge Community Center and worked with underserved teens there. A working session with the students included a presentation on smart city technologies, and a brainstorming session on creating an educational opportunity for the students through partnership on Smart City Committee research. The students created surveys to gauge public opinions on key Smart Cities technologies and developed an informational chatbot to answer any questions about Smart Cities -- these public sentiment data will be incorporated into The Committee's white paper output.

The Smart Cities Committee also guest lectured at The Cincinnati Country Day School for its 'Global Cities' course for high school juniors concentrating in history. The talk covered The Committee's current work, the role of various technologies in the advancement of cities, and how participation in public political discourse can empower citizens.

Lastly, the Smart Cities Committee built up relationships and partnerships with different constituencies. The Committee held 9 official meetings during 2019 and had 30+ people join the mailing list.

Next Steps: The next steps for the Smart Cities Committee are to:
- Formalize/finalize white papers
- Review with CTAB and rev on final additions/edits
- Deliver to necessary stakeholders within City Council and/or Mayoral leadership
- Promote action (eg. ordinances, resolutions)