

Community Solutions Advisory Service

Introduction

The Community Solutions Network is a program of Future Cities Canada, and led by Evergreen. In Spring 2019, alongside our lead technical partner OpenNorth, we launched a personalized advisory service available to Canadian communities interested in developing and implementing smart cities projects.

The broader goal of the Community Solutions Network is to help communities build service area capacity and improve the lives of residents using data and connected technology approaches. We help communities navigate the smart cities landscape.

As the project lead, Evergreen is working with OpenNorth and partners to provide valuable information, learning opportunities and advisory services in key areas of data and technology for municipal and community leaders, helping to improve the lives of residents.

Advisory Service Overview

At no cost to communities, the Advisory Service offers basic and advanced courses online, guidelines, templates, as well as personalized guidance from leading advisors on a range of smart cities and relevant topics, including open standards in procurement, implementing privacy policy, approaches to data & tech literacy, developing ethical guidelines on artificial intelligence, and building awareness of indigenous data sovereignty, and much more.

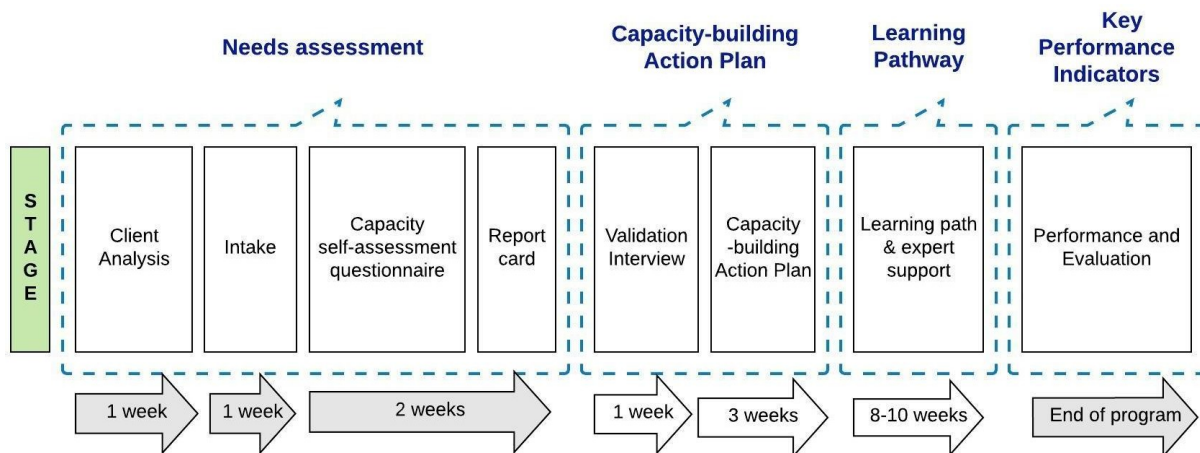
The intended audiences of the Service are elected officials, high-level decision makers, and technical leads within cities and communities across Canada.

Engaging with the Advisory Service team follows a series simple steps, communities will:

1. conduct a needs assessment interview to gather data on its specific needs and challenges, and complete a diagnostic questionnaire to capture community-level capacities on a range of smart cities topics;
2. create a tailored Capacity-building Action Plan, which summarizes the needs assessment and identifies a specific and critical activity to develop in order to achieve a short-term, impactful action;
3. develop a Learning Pathway based on critical activities identified in the Capacity-building Action Plan that works to build the capacity necessary for a community to implement its smart cities approaches; and,
4. complete an endline self-assessment questionnaire to measure changes in knowledge and evaluate capacity as relating to the service and CSN program.

Please see Figure 1 for an overview of the Advisory Service Process, and description of the steps and deliverables offered.

Figure 1: Advisory Service Process



Step-by-step of the Advisory Service Process:

Community Needs Assessment: The Advisory Service will provide a Community Needs Assessment at no cost to the community, to gather data on the community’s needs and challenges, and to evaluate the gaps between the current and desired situations. This assessment includes an introductory needs analysis discussion as well as completion of a diagnostic self-assessment questionnaire. The results of the diagnostic self-assessment questionnaire will be presented as a report card that delineates boundaries in capacity relevant to key smart cities concepts and practices.

Capacity-building Action Plan (CAP): Once the needs assessment has been completed, the Advisory Service will conduct a Validation Interview to discuss findings and present the community with a personalized Capacity-building Action Plan. The CAP identifies two potential priority activities to develop that will help build the capacity necessary for the community to implement its open smart cities approaches. (See Figure 2: Self-Assessment Capacity Building Scorecard)

Learning Pathway: After one critical activity and corresponding Learning Pathway have been agreed upon, members of the community will gain access to the online Learning Management System (LMS). Through the LMS, the community members will access a sequence of Advisory Service products, which include basic and advanced courses, guidelines, webinars and one-on-one support from leading professionals and academics within the chosen area of expertise. (See Figure 3: Upcoming Course Curriculum)

Evaluation: Once the Learning Pathway is completed, communities will be asked to complete an endline self-assessment questionnaire to measure changes in knowledge and capacity as pertaining to the program.

Figure 2: Self-Assessment Capacity Scorecard

The Community Solutions Network Advisory Service has developed a self-assessment questionnaire to capture community-level capacities on a range of Open Smart Cities topics. This is centred around the four Open Smart City domains: Data, Governance, Hardware & Software, and People & Engagement. The results of the questionnaire have been compiled into what we’re calling a “Self-Assessment Capacity Scorecard”, which provides a graphical summary of the results of the questionnaire.

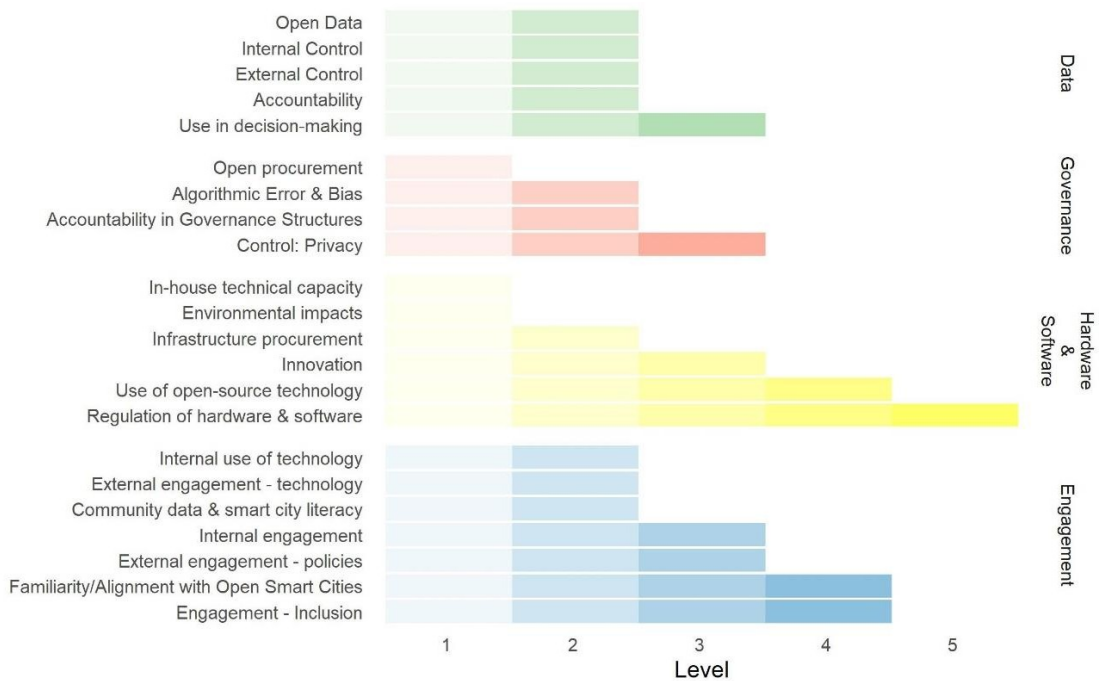


Figure 3: Upcoming Course Curriculum

Listed below is the intended course curriculum and modules, categorized by the four Open Smart City domains (Data, Governance, Hardware and Software, People & Engagement).

| # | Course | Area of Learning | Level |
|---|--|---------------------|----------|
| 1 | Fundamentals of Open Smart Cities | Open Smart Cities | Basic |
| 2 | Fundamentals of data for Open Smart Cities | Data | Basic |
| 3 | What are open standards for data? | Data | Basic |
| 4 | Implementing an Open data policy | Data | Advanced |
| 5 | Data governance in Open Smart Cities | Governance | Advanced |
| 6 | What is Open procurement? | Governance | Basic |
| 7 | Assessing smart city infrastructure for privacy and security | Governance | Advanced |
| 8 | Fundamentals of Open Source | Hardware & Software | Basic |
| 9 | Digital literacy for residents | People & Engagement | Basic |

Contact for Advisory Service

Communities across all regions of Canada are currently invited to apply and confirm their eligibility to the Advisory Service. To apply or for more information, please contact Justine Lemoine at communitysolutions@evergreen.ca.

For more information about Evergreen, OpenNorth, or the Community Solutions Network please visit www.communitysolutionsnetwork.ca.