

Startup helps make cities smart through open data

mySidewalk analyzes open datasets to help local governments and communities work better together.

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With vast amounts of data now publicly available, the answers to many questions lie buried in the numbers, and we already saw a publishing platform helping entrepreneurs [visualize government data](#). For an organization as passionate about civic engagement as [mySidewalk](#), this open data is a treasure trove of compelling stories.

mySidewalk was founded by city planners who recognized the potential force for change contained in local communities. Yet without a compelling reason to get involved, many individuals remain ‘interested bystanders’ — something mySidewalk is determined to change.

Using the latest available data, mySidewalk creates dashboards that are customized for every project to help local public officials make the most informed decisions possible. The dashboards present visualizations of a wide range of socioeconomic and demographic datasets, as well as provide local, regional and national comparisons, all of which help to tell the stories behind the numbers.

It is those stories that mySidewalk believes will provide enough motivation for the ‘interested bystanders’ to get involved. As it says on the mySidewalk website, “Share your ideas. Shape your community.” Organizations of all types have taken notice of the power of data, with businesses using [geo-tagging to analyze social media](#) content, and real-time [information sharing helping humanitarians](#) in crises.

How else could data be used to effect positive social change?

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