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PRESS RELEASE

City of Schenectady Named Finalist in IDC Government Insights' 5th Annual Smart Cities North America Awards

SCHENECTADY – Mayor Gary McCarthy today announced the City of Schenectady has been named a finalist in IDC Government Insights' fifth annual Smart Cities North America Awards (SCNAA) in the Administration category for its Community Officials Data Exchange (C.O.D.E.) project that shares data around problem property owners and best practices in code enforcement with the goal of using data to address urban blight in our communities.

The awards recognize the progress municipalities have made across North America in executing Smart Cities projects, as well as provide a forum for sharing best practices to help accelerate Smart City development in their region. As a next step in the nomination process, IDC invites the public to vote on the named finalists at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCNAA22. Voting will be open through 5:00pm on Sunday, March 13, 2022.

Finalists in the SCNAA illustrate best practice examples of how forward-thinking municipalities are effectively leveraging technology and innovation to offer new services and economic opportunities and to meet the needs and expectations of residents. The City of Schenectady was recognized for unprecedented progress in creating and sustaining smart city projects in the Administration category.

The Community Officials Data Exchange (C.O.D.E.), led by the City of Schenectady in partnership with the Center for Technology in Government at the University at Albany (CTG UAlbany), was designed and created to bring together code enforcement and neighborhood officials to share data on problem property owners while also providing a community and platform to offer best practices in property management so that all communities throughout the state can take action against blight. Funded by the New York State Department of State's local government grant programs, the project pilot started with the cities of Schenectady, Amsterdam, Gloversville, and Cortland and through an extensive design, data management, and development process will launch statewide.

"We are proud to receive this recognition for our efforts to combat blight that harms neighborhood quality of life," **Mayor McCarthy said**. "On behalf of the City of Schenectady I would like to thank the New York State Department of State's Local Government Division, CTG UAlbany, and the mayors of Amsterdam, Gloversville, and Cortland for their partnership and continued engagement in working together to address blight."

"Developing a way to share data across local governments is a considerable undertaking that needs expertise and leadership," **said Meghan Cook Program Director, CTG UAlbany**. "The code enforcement officials, neighborhood directors, fire department chiefs, and IT leaders from the cities of Schenectady, Gloversville, Amsterdam, and Cortland have put in countless hours in defining and testing a way to share this data so that communities throughout the state can easily join in. Their work, alongside developers from Community Development Solutions (CDS) and the International Code Council (ICC), should be commended in establishing and launching this innovation."

"We commend all the SCNAA finalists for their commitment and dedication to making smart city initiatives a reality, designed to improve and enhance cities and states across North America for the betterment of all citizens and residents," said **Ruthbea Yesner, Vice President, IDC Government Insights and Smart Cities and Communities Strategies**. "As more and more government officials recognize the invaluable role of innovative technology in creating new economic opportunities, enhancing citizen engagement, and optimizing operations, the library of practical use cases will continue to grow, helping to evangelize the power of smart city initiatives and provide a roadmap to success."

In a recent study in the City of Schenectady, it was determined that a vacant property can cost the city $64,000 on average over the course of five years. With approximately 400 vacant properties in the city, it can cost approximately $5 million annually in expenses and uncollected revenue. Blighted properties can often become vacant properties so these efforts are focused to change the trajectory of a beginning blighted property, **Mayor McCarthy added**.

For additional information about these awards or to speak with [Ruthbea Yesner](), please contact Sarah Murray at 781-378-2674 or [sarah@attunecommunications.com]().

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