Tool: Readiness Checklist for Planning Main Street Data and Technology Projects

Framing the challenge

Notes

Developing an effective challenge statement
- What is the main street challenge you want to address with this project?
  - Why is addressing this challenge important?
  - What are the short-term and long-term implications of not addressing this challenge?
- What outcomes are you hoping to achieve?
  - How do these outcomes align with broader community objectives?
  - Is there a role for a data and technology project in supporting these outcomes?

Engaging and collaborating with stakeholders
- Have you engaged stakeholders in defining the challenge?
  - Are there any stakeholders not currently engaged who may offer valuable perspectives?
- Would the proposed project benefit from collaboration with others?
  - Do you have existing relationships you could leverage into a partnership?
  - Have you defined a clear value proposition for potential partners?
  - Does each partner have the necessary resources and capacity to participate?

Further resources:
- Main Street Data Primer: A Resource for Policymakers, Main Street Stakeholders and Urban Researchers (Canadian Urban Institute)
- From Consultation to Co-Creation in the Open Smart City: Toolkit for Public Engagement (Evergreen and Digital Justice Lab)
- Design Thinking Modules (Evergreen)

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Sourcing and managing data

Identifying data needs
- What types of quantitative and qualitative data are required to understand your challenge and develop effective solutions to it?
- What kind of analytical techniques and methods will you use?
- How will you communicate findings to stakeholders?

Collecting new data
- Does the project require new data collection?
- Is it feasible to collect this data? Does it require special technology?

Accessing existing data
- Does the project require accessing data held by another department or a third-party source?
- What terms, conditions or costs are associated with using this data?
- Do you anticipate other barriers to accessing this data?

Data management
- Do you have a plan in place to manage data throughout the project lifecycle?
- What data quality standards are important for your project?
- How will access be controlled?
- Who will be the designated data steward for each dataset?

Notes

Further resources:
- Main Street Data Primer: A Resource for Policymakers, Main Street Stakeholders and Urban Researchers (Canadian Urban Institute)
- Moving from Idea to Practice: Three Resources for Harnessing the Power of Data Sharing Agreements (Open Data Policy Lab)
- Introduction to Data Sharing and Integration (AISP)
- Data Responsibility Journey (The GovLab)

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Assessing implementation capacity

Staff capacity
- Do you have staff with the necessary skills, knowledge, and time to implement and support this project?
- Is there an opportunity to add staff capacity for this project (hiring, training, additional budget, etc.)?
- Are there opportunities to bring in temporary outside support?

Technology
- Does your organization have the software and/or hardware needed for the project?
    - Are there proprietary products on the market that would meet project needs?
    - Are there open-source solutions that would meet project needs?
- Have you assessed the upfront and ongoing costs associated with these products?
- Have you assessed privacy and security risks associated with these products?

Funding
- Is there sufficient funding to launch the project?
- Is there an opportunity to pool departmental budgets?
- Are there external funding sources that could be leveraged?
- How will the project be sustained after one-time funding has been exhausted?

Notes

Further resources:
- Municipal Digital Transformation Guidebook (NDI)
- Process Code for Software Procurement (Foundation for Public Code)
- Innovation Toolkit: A Community Resource for Data and Technology Projects (Evergreen)