

Editorial Preface

Municipal Open Data and New Civic Technologies for Participatory Urban Planning

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Municipal open data and civic technologies for participatory urban planning are the two key themes addressed in the third issue of volume five of the International Journal of E-Planning Research. Peter A. Johnson, from the University of Waterloo, Canada, examines in the first research article - *'Reflecting on the Success of Open Data'* - how municipal government evaluates the success of their open data programs, based on interviews with eight Canadian municipal governments. The study identifies two approaches for the evaluation of municipal open data programs and offers findings that can provide guidance for the development of open data metrics. In the following research article, *'Police Service Crime Mapping as Civic Technology: A Critical Assessment'*, Teresa Scassa, from University of Ottawa, Canada, shows how it is becoming common for municipal police services in North America to make online crime maps available to the public. Based on the case of three Canadian police forces, the author examines the particular narratives of crime in the city provided by these maps, evaluates the quality of the data mapped, examines the limits to the use and reuse of crime data imposed by the law, and whether this particular type of crime mapping improves transparency and accountability, besides other aspects related with the use of private sector civic technologies.

The following two research articles included in this volume deal with participatory Geoweb and with the use of Minecraft, the popular video game. In *'Harnessing the Chaotic. Using the Participatory Geoweb to Make Sense of Forest Fires'*, Jon M. Corbett, Samantha Brennan, and Aidan Whitely, from the University of British Columbia Okanagan, Canada, explore and discuss the increasingly important issue related to the risk of forest fires due to climate change and expanding urban development. Since not all impacts of forest fires are hard impacts, the authors present the Geoweb tool developed to support citizen-to-citizen dialogue and through that to make sense of the fluid and chaotic soft impacts associated with forest fires. The fourth and last research article, *'Civic Crafting in Urban Planning Public Consultation: Exploring Minecraft's Potential'*, written by Lisa Ward Mather and Pamela J. Robinson, both from Ryerson University, Canada, explores and examines, based on a sample of key informants, how and whether this popular video game could be used for urban planning consultation processes. These informants, practicing urban planners, have been asked to assess the potential of this video game for participation processes in urban planning. The article presents and discusses the results of this inquiry.

This issue includes a review of Katharine S. Willis' book *'Netspaces: Space and Place in a Networked World'*, an interesting exploration and analysis of the impact of networked technologies and infrastructures on how we experience and inhabit urban space and the consequences of this for the design of cities.

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