

NEWS RELEASE

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CTG to Partner with City of Albany to Improve Effectiveness of City's Code Enforcement

The Center for Technology in Government (CTG) and the College of Computing and Information (CCI) at the University at Albany is partnering with the City of Albany to identify strengths and needs in the City's current capability to conduct effective code enforcement activities and to provide the foundation for a City-level action plan.

First responders in the fire and police departments need real-time accurate information to take appropriate actions, the Mayor and Common Council need planning information to help the city prosper, and citizens need to be able to interact with city government about their properties. Doing this effectively depends on having an underlying information system that meets the needs of the various stakeholders.

"Effective code enforcement, like a number of other responsibilities carried out by city governments, is key to sustainable growth, economic development, enhanced service delivery, and greater citizen participation in the process of governing," said Mayor Gerald D. Jennings. "The City of Albany, like other leading cities in the U.S. and around the world, recognizes this critical relationship and sees this partnership with CTG and CCI at the University at Albany as critical to enhancing our current code enforcement capability."

"Data integration tends to be narrowly seen as an information systems problem," said Theresa Pardo, Director of CTG and UAlbany Professor, Public Administration and Policy and Informatics. "CTG has a long-standing research and practice tradition based on an alternative view that before new technology-enabled data integration capability can be leveraged for increased process efficiencies and enhanced access, a full understanding of the businesses processes and related information flows must be documented, and typically, reengineered."

This perspective will guide the analysis of city and citizen code enforcement-related information needs. The service delivery challenges of code enforcement are both information intensive and driven by processes that cross traditional organizational and bureaucratic boundaries. Through this partnership, CTG and CCI will work with the City of Albany to produce a detailed mapping and analysis of the relevant data flows and supporting internal businesses processes. This research-practice partnership will lay the foundation for integrating the city's critical information resources and enhancing city services.

"Like most modern organizations, the City of Albany depends on having the right information available to its officials. Doing this effectively means building an information system that meets the needs of the various stakeholders," said Peter Bloniarz, Dean of the College of Computing and Information at the University at Albany/State University of New York. "At UAlbany's College of Computing and Information, we specialize in how IT systems function in complex social and personal environments. We are pleased to work with officials in the City of Albany in helping make sure that they have access to the information they need to serve their citizens effectively."

CTG is also studying these types of "Smart City" challenges in a project with six other US and international city governments and research teams. The lessons learned during the City of Albany's code enforcement project, as well as from insights from the other cities, will contribute to a best practice framework that can be used in other city governments within New York and throughout the world.

The mission of the Center for Technology in Government at the University at Albany is to foster public sector innovation, enhance capability, generate public value, and support good governance. We carry out this mission through applied research, knowledge sharing, and collaboration at the intersection of policy, management, and technology. For more information visit www.ctg.albany.edu.

The College of Computing and Information prepares UAlbany students to succeed in the information-rich world they will inhabit. The College was one of the first academic units in the country to combine strong technical education and research with an application-oriented perspective that ensures that information systems effectively serve the needs of individuals and organizations, offering Computer Science, Informatics, and Information Studies. For more information, visit: <http://www.albany.edu/ci>

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