DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICTS
// PLAYBOOK

BOUNCE LAB

Smart
Cities
Council

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THE DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT PROVIDES BEST IN CLASS CONNECTIVITY, GENERATES DISTRICT SCALE INSIGHTS, COMMUNICATES ITS PERFORMANCE, BUILDS DIGITAL AND DATA LITERACY AND OFFERS THE BEST EXPERIENCE.

BECAUSE OF THIS, THE DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT IS MORE RESILIENT.

BECAUSE OF THIS, THE DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT WILL THRIVE AND PROSPER.

FORWARD

The idea of the Digital Benefit District was a result of deep engagement during peak COVID-19 lockdown, when it became clear that small business was struggling to survive, work from home resulted in higher than normal neighbourhood activity and local council's at times struggled to understand what and where the greatest impacts were, and how to respond.

The Smart Cities Council was curious, and started asking the question - "what would a more resilient neighbourhood look like, and could greater digital enablement and data insights play a role?"

Combined with observations from abroad on district scale community building - such as Business Improvement Districts, EcoDistricts, Innovation Districts and Community Benefit Districts - the SCC felt a new model of partnership driven smart neighbourhood development, with collaborative governance arrangements, could be an accelerator for economic recovery.

And so, having already led the industry in defining smart communities through the Code for Smart Communities, the Digital Benefit District concept emerged.

BOUNCE LAB

"…BOUNCE LAB IS A PRIVATE PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP THINK TANK SET UP BY THE SMART CITIES COUNCIL IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 HEALTH PANDEMIC, IN AN EFFORT TO HELP STIMULATE A DIGITALLY ENABLED AND DATA DRIVEN ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAYBOOK

This Playbook offers a blueprint for upgrading district or neighbourhood centres in a way that enhances sustainability, prosperity and resilience through digital enablement and data literacy.

The Playbook presents a series of outcomes, metrics and possible strategies to achieve this. This content is geography and scale neutral, meaning it could be applied anywhere within a city, town or region.

ABOUT 'DISTRICT'

In its simplest form, a 'district' is an area of a city or town.

Our neighbourhoods, precincts, villages and main streets are all examples. These are the building blocks of our cities.

Shaping our cities to be smarter and more sustainable starts at these levels of the city. The Digital Benefit District builds on this approach to city shaping, by building from the neighbourhood up.

PATHWAYS TO A DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT

Opportunities to 'build' a Digital Benefit District may come in various forms, including:

- **The development of a new community, such as a significant urban renewal precinct or greenfield development**

- **The redevelopment of an existing neighbourhood centre, high street or shopping village**

- **The renewal of industrial or employment zones**

- **By auditing and amending an existing precinct plan, neighbourhood plan or priority development area and embedding within it the intent of this Playbook**

THE SIX CORE STRATEGIES OF THE DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT

District Connectivity | District Insights | District Literacy | District Resilience | District Impact | District Governance.

SETTING YOUR OUTCOMES, METRICS AND STRATEGIES

The Digital Benefit District should be defined by a series of outcomes, metrics and strategies. We have developed a recommended set within this Playbook, but you should use this as a starting point only.

Each is defined as:

OUTCOMES
This is the experience or performance we are seeking from the district.

METRICS
This is how experience and performance can be measured.

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES
These are recommended solutions that can support achievement of the outcomes, as measured by the metrics.

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THE SMART CITIES COUNCIL WAS CURIOUS, AND STARTED ASKING THE QUESTION -

…WHAT WOULD A MORE RESILIENT NEIGHBOURHOOD LOOK LIKE, NOW THAT WE HAVE EXPERIENCED A GLOBAL HEALTH PANDEMIC?

…AND COULD GREATER DIGITAL ENABLEMENT AND DATA LITERACY PLAY A ROLE IN BUILDING THAT RESILIENCE?

DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY

The Digital Benefit District offers best in class and ubiquitous connectivity, for all people and all things.

OUTCOMES

The district offers connectivity for all people

The district offers connectivity for all things

METRICS

- No. internet connections per premises, the type of connection and its speed

- Percentage area of the district with free WiFi

- Percentage of local residential areas with internet connections supporitng work from home

- No. of networks available to connect devices for free and transmit data

- No. of assets connected across the district

STRATEGIES

- Each business in the district has a broadband connection at a speed appropriate for the appplication

- Business areas and main streets have free WiFi coverage

- Audit of home-based internet connectivity and speed to determine suitability to support work from home and school from home

- Cellular and non-cellular IoT connectivity is provided throughout the district

- Provide at least an NBIOT and LPWAN network throughout the district, to enable a range of sensors and other devices to gather data about what's happening (see District Insights for minimum data sets)

- Businesses are 'Bluetooth enabled' to allow data to be sent to mobile devices
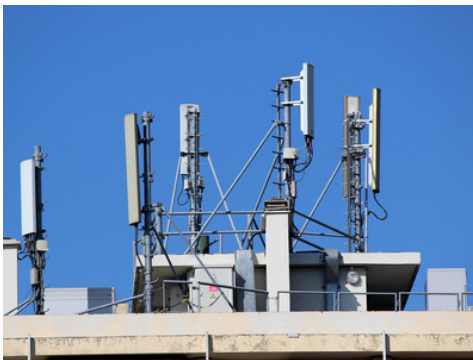
A core function of the smart city is to collect, communicate and crunch data, allowing better and more timely decisions and investments to be made.

Connectivity allows data to flow, and is therefore a critical enabler of prosperity for the Digital Benefit District.

DISTRICT INSIGHTS

The Digital Benefit District invests in the collection, integration, analytics and communication of data insights.

OUTCOMES	METRICS	STRATEGIES

The district collects the best data	• No. and type of data sets collected across the district	• Audit existing data sets across the district and identify:
		  ○ those that could be opened and shared to help generate insights
		  ○ where there are gaps in the core data sets
		
		• Collect a minimum of five data sets across the entire district from the list of 'Data Insights' as per **Support Info #1**
		
		• Ensure the five Data Leadership Vitals outlined in **Support Info #2** are embraced in all data collection and management activities

The district generates and shares the best insights and stories	• No. and type of data sets made available on a public dashboard
	
	• No. of insights generated:
	  ○ for consumption by local businesses
	  ○ for consumption by the council
	  ○ for consumption by the community
		• Provide a district-level dashboard that displays data, insights and stories
		
		• Analyse data sets:
		  ○ to generate insights for better decision making
		  ○ to generate stories to share with the community to attract patronage, and attract investment
		  ○ using enabling tools such as those in **Supporting Info #3**

SUPPORT INFO #1
DATA INSIGHTS FOR DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICTS

The Digital Benefit District seeks to be generate insights, so it can make the best decisions and prosper. Insights could include:

GENERAL
- **Type and number of businesses within the district**
- **Number of businesses with an online presence**
- **Number of businesses with business information available on Google**
- **Level of local and external patronage to businesses within the district**
- **Understanding and benchmarking of current mix of people, businesses and economic activity**

ECONOMIC
- **Amount of consumer spending within the district**
- **Count of local vs external visitors coming into the district**
- **Understanding local trends and variations in economic activity between businesses**

MOBILITY
- **Parking occupancy rates**
- **Pedestrian levels (dwell time) within the district**
- **Bicycle movements around the district**
- **Public transport routes servicing the district**

SOCIAL
- **Social media analytics on what the community values within the district**
- **Participation rates by the community in local business promotions**
- **Placemaking strategies to increase dwell times and activity**

SUPPORT INFO #2
DATA LEADERSHIP VITALS

Data Purpose - Purpose is important because it brings reason to your data. Without it, your data risks providing little value. And without purpose, you lack legitimacy, and ultimately transparency and trust.

Data Privacy - The law is non-negotiable. This is where privacy starts. Embrace tools and methods for ensuring that a 'privacy by design' approach becomes a culture of your organisation, such as the Privacy Impact Assessment.

Data Security - End to end security that provides full lifecycle protection of data and your physical assets is essential. Ensuring that all data is securely retained (and destroyed at the end of the process) is a non-negotiable.

Data Ethics - Data ethics requires more than just common sense. It guides decisions about the purpose of data collection, what data should be collected, how it should and should not be used and who should access it.

Data Governance - Data governance is the set of 'arrangements' put in place to help an organisation realise the value of data. The quality of your data, the standards you adhere to, the API's you generate, which data you open, close or share... are all part of data governance.

DISTRICT INSIGHTS

The Digital Benefit District invests in the collection, integration, analytics and communication of data insights.

OUTCOMES

METRICS

STRATEGIES

The district uses data and insights to engage the community

- No. of platforms that connect business, community and the local council

- Utilise a platform(s) (application, website, other) that supports engagement between whats happening in the district, and customers and the community

- Governance structure/functions that can support business activity and engagement with the community

- Availability of information and resources to enable community interaction with businesses

The district makes insight-driven decisions and investments

- Availability of insights, generated from the data sets collected

- No. of investments driven by data/insights and directly aligned with outcomes

- Local Council to facilitate participatory budgeting or grant processes that support catalysing investment in the district

- Planning controls and infrastructure plans support insights-driven decisions within the district

- Annual budgeting, business cases, zoning decisions, land use and planning permissions align with districts insights and outcomes

SUPPORTING INFO #3
ENABLING TOOLS FOR GENERATING DISTRICT INSIGHTS

Vacancy audits
People and journey counters
Analytics
Artificial intelligence
Temperature monitoring
Vision systems with machine learning
Climate / weather sensors
Wayfinding communications
Community building outcome indicator analysis
Ubiquitous broadband coverage
Google maps
Digital Twin functionality
Intelligent transport hubs
Formalised local business networks
Artificial intelligence engine across social media platforms
IoT connectivity to support sensors
Free connectivity for residents

DISTRICT LITERACY

Businesses within the Digital Benefit District have the awareness and capability to fully participate and thrive in the digital economy.

OUTCOMES

The district has an enhanced level of digital and data literacy

METRICS

- No. of new websites (digital presence) established in the district

- No. of businesses in the district completing a minimum level of digital literacy training

- Level of efficiency gains from digital transformation of businesses within the district

STRATEGIES

- Provision of training to all businesses within the district, including as a minimum:
  - Maintaining a web presence
  - E-commerce essentials
  - Cloud computing
  - Digital transformation of core 'back office' functions such as payroll, CRM, supply chain information sharing
  - Social media fundamentals

- Identify and nurture disadvantaged and vulnerable business owners, such as women, minority ethnic communities, people with a disability and older business owners

- Build and facilitate networking opportunities to motivate businesses in their use of digital and data transformation opportunities

- Offer a 'Digital Innovation Incubator' for the district, to attract and encourage digital entreprenueurship

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The rapid expansion of technological capital in industries such as Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care and the Resources sector to name a few, is leading a disruption in digital readiness skills of small business in Queensland. Findings from the annual CCIQ Digital Readiness Survey (Digital Survey) in 2018 reported that 90% of businesses believed that they should become more digitally savvy.

DISTRICT LITERACY

Businesses within the Digital Benefit District have the awareness and capability to fully participate and thrive in the internet economy.

OUTCOMES

The district has a strong digital relationship between citizens, businesses and the local Council

METRICS

- No. of local residents connected with local businesses on social media

- No. businesses with a digital engagement platform (not social media, eg. App)

- No. customers engaging with local business through engagement platforms

- No. businesses within the district the local Council is digitally connected to

STRATEGIES

- Build and launch an engagement app or similar platform to facilitate the exchange of opportunities and data between businesses, the community and the local Council

- Interactive kiosks and digital wayfinding is available, and responsive to the needs of all businesses and citizens

- Community of interest network / "High pages" style platform for Local Council

- Embed digital interaction (by businesses and the community) into planning processes, exploring the ways virtual and augmented reality can enhance the physical experience of place

- Any technology and data solutions should provide for ease of use, have great user experience and be 'lasting'

Resilience is as much about our mindsets, behaviours and approaches, as it is the physical make up of our built assets and how cities are planned and designed.

COVID-19 has tested the resilience of our people, economy and planet. One thing that is certain, is that digital and data enablement strengthened our capacity to maintain continuity, and therefore opportunity during our most challenging times in 2020, and is likely to continue to do so for years to come.

We believe our economic recovery and future resilience can be accelerated if we #builtitbackdigital.

DISTRICT RESILIENCE

The Digital Benefit District embraces digital enablement and data insights to strengthen its qualities of resilience.

OUTCOMES

The district can continue to trade, regardless of shock or stress

The district is agile and can fully participate in support programs

METRICS

- No. of businesses who can trade in-store and online
- No. of critical services available in the district
- No. of systems with known cyber vulnerabilities
- No. of principles from Supporting Info #4 applied by businesses

- No. of supporting stakeholders within the district's ecosystem
- No. of supporting government bodies within the district ecosystem
- No. of 'touch points' where the local community has exposure to engagement opportunities

STRATEGIES

- A business continuity plan is in place for each of the districts tenants, covering issues including connectivity redundancy, data back-up and other systems and process resiliency
- Working with the local Council, a retail futures strategy is developed to trial new technologies to help elevate store-based retail and create immersive / digitally augmented customer experiences in person and online
- Build opportunities that ensure a seamless transition from work to home

- A plan exists to ensure local schools and similar community groups can provide volunteer / other non-financial support opportunities in times of stress
- Digital kiosks, websites and other platforms are available to allow businesses to articulate their needs, interests, and opportunities

SUPPORTING INFO #4
PRINCIPLES OF DISTRICT RESILIENCE

Minimum human vulnerability
Diverse livelihood and employment
Effective safeguards to human health and life
Collective identity and community support
Comprehensive security and rule of law
Sustainable economy
Reduced exposure and fragility
Effective provision of critical services
Reliable mobility and communications
Effective leadership and management
Empowered stakeholders
Integrated development planning

DISTRICT IMPACT

The Digital Benefit District is transparent, accountable and measures and reports on its impact.

OUTCOMES	METRICS	STRATEGIES AND TASKS
The district reports its performance annually	• No. of metrics the district reports against • No. of new partners and collaborators the district recruits to support its efforts • No. of milestones achieved	• A District Impact Report is published annually reporting against the outcomes and metrics it has set • Community and business stakeholders within the district have developed an awaesness and commitment to gathering district insights and disclosing performance
The district builds trust with its community, and thus enhances customer loyalty	• No. of returning customers • Level of feedback received	• Implement a deliberate campaign to build customer loyalty through greater transparency and trust on the value the district is contributing to the community
The district gives back to the community	• Amount ($) donated and hours of volunteer time provided by district businesses to the local community	• Establish a district impact task force that can lead in creating opportunities for district businesses to contribute to the local community • Include volunteer contributions and outcomes in the District Impact Report

DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

The Digital Benefit District creates the conditions for a commitment to change and therefore action.

OUTCOMES	METRICS	POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

The district uses collaborative governance as a vehicle for action and investment	• District governance structure instituted	• A District Governance strategy is developed and implemented that includes:
		  ○ Community-based asset mapping
		  ○ Assessment of collaborative governance readiness
		  ○ Engagement and formation
		  ○ Supporting organisations
		  ○ Statement of commitment
		  ○ Define powers and financing arrangements
		  ○ Identify preferred governance structure

Funding and financing of district investments are accelerated	• No. of new revenue streams for district-scale investment
	
	• Value of annual investment made
		• The district governance entity works with key stakeholders to identify new mechanisms for funding and financing investments to accelerate district prosperity, including consideration to:
		  ○ PPP's
		  ○ New grants
		  ○ Tax Increment Financing-like mechanisms

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Collaborative governance is a set of processes and structures for communities to address public problems that can't be easily solved by one organisation or sector alone.

YOUR NEXT THREE MOVES

1. REVIEW NEIGHBOURHOODS WITHIN THE CITY/TOWN TO IDENTIFY KEY OPPORTUNITY AREAS TO CREATE A DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT

Ask yourself:
- **Which places were hardest hit by COVID?**
- **Which places display the most promise in bouncing back and providing jobs and other opportunities for business and community uplift?**
- **Which places show high community/local business support/energy? - where could collaborative governance models be established?**
- **Which places could attract co-funding/investment?**
- **Which places have existing real estate/infrastructure work planned/funded?**
- **Where are existing economic development priorities allocated?**
- **Are you 'scanning' for opportunities regularly - to align with budget cycles?**
- **Can you leverage new market factors/forces - what will new development, business operation and supply chain conditions look like post-COVID?**
- **Could retail precincts be a potential priority?**
- **What can you build back swiftly?**
- **Are there new hybrid models for redevelopment that you can test or promote - bricks & mortar vs clicks & mortar?**

YOUR NEXT THREE MOVES

2. AUDIT EXISTING CAPACITY FOR DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT OPPORTUNITIES

Ask yourself:
- **How do your existing districts compare to the outcomes articulated in this Playbook?**
- **Can you prioritise the neighbourhoods that show promise - By ease? Most need? Most capacity?**
- **Are there existing district plans that show a strong level of alignment with the principles of the Digital Benefit District?**
- **Can potential Digital Benefit District strategies (as listed in this Playbook) leverage existing planning and economic development processes?**
- **Do you have a preference to augment/align, rather than create a new layer/type of 'plan'?**

YOUR NEXT THREE MOVES

3. CREATE A PLAN FOR THREE NEIGHBOURHOODS TO UNDERTAKE EARLY DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICT ENGAGEMENT/MOBILISATION

Here's your checklist to mobilise:
- **Map community-based assets**
- **Identify early investors**
- **Engage key support organisations**
- **Assemble core stakeholder group of the most invested**

SOME FINAL NOTES:

THESE STRATEGIES ARE NOT UNIQUE TO ACTIVITY CENTRES, THEY CAN BE APPLIED TO OTHER PRECINCT TYPES. THESE STRATEGIES NEED TO BUILD ON GOOD URBAN DESIGN, DON'T TREAT THEM AS TECHNO-BLING. SEEK-OUT OPPORTUNITIES TO UPGRADE EXISTING PLANS OR PROJECTS, OR WHERE THE MOST ENERGY IS. THEN LOOK FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES. KEEP AN EYE ON THE HORIZON FOR THE COMING DISRUPTIONS AND EMBRACE THEM. THINK BIG, START SMALL, MOVE FAST.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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