The City as a Platform: How the Digital Networks Are Changing Urban Life and Governance

Last Modified on 11/02/2019 12:02 pm CET

Author: David Bollier

Date of publish: 2016

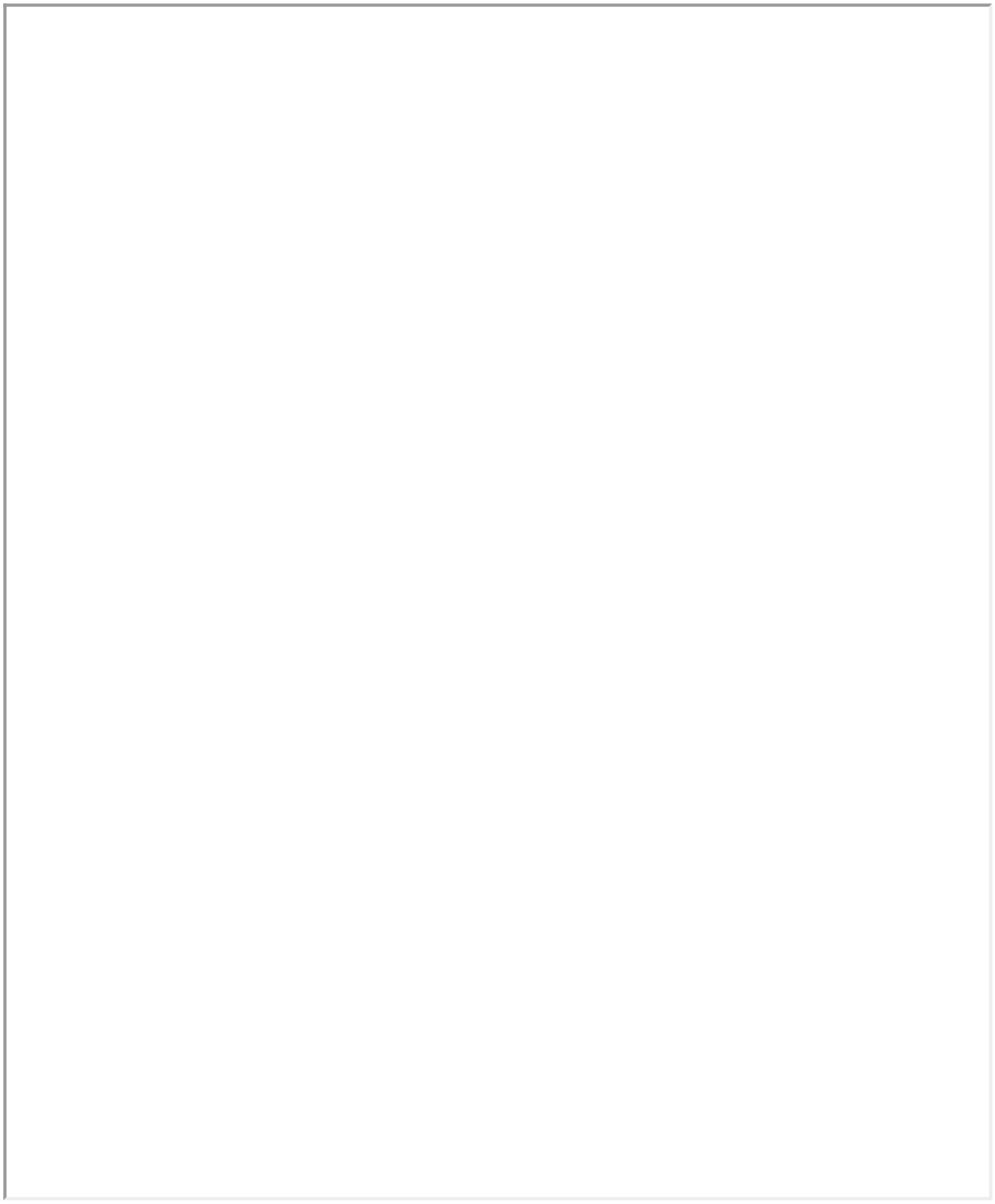
Why did we conduct this research?

With the emergence of the sharing economy, city governments felt the need to evolve as well, as to be able to provide proper legal frameworks of action for such new interactions between users, providers, and those in between. Municipalities becoming increasingly active in the sharing and platform economy can start with simple steps as providing better and faster interconnections both between citizens and citizen-municipality ones. Nevertheless, there has been seen the raise of some cities becoming platforms themselves. The paper analyzes how this transformation has been becoming a reality, taking as the starting point the 2015's City Innovative Summit in San Francisco, where the topic was the center of attention.

Key findings:

- City as platform can be one of the solutions to deal with issues such as lack of citizen engagement.
- Cities as platforms are still a disruptive approach to governance and a deeply challenging approach to a very rooted set of norms and systems (how cities should be run).
- How to develop cities that are capable of constantly learn and evolve (need for a cultural change).
- Public trust as a must (privacy and data protection).
- Ethic use of the collected data.
- Shift from governing to "dictate and control" to "facilitate and empower"
- Citizens and their concerns are at the core of politics, and everything is built

after this. Establishment of open spaces where citizens can engage with the city's life and contribute to projects and new ideas.



Reference:

Bollier, D. (2016). The city as platform: How digital networks are changing urban life and governance. *Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute*.