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U.S. Conference of Mayors & NYU Launch the Mayors Leadership Institute on Smart Cities.

Washington, DC — In the face of rapidly changing technologies that could potentially accelerate progress for American cities, the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) in collaboration with the New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, has launched the ***Mayors Leadership Institute on Smart Cities*** (SCI). The goal of the Institute is to provide participating mayors with a clear path forward for a major initiative, a framework for approaching smart city opportunities, and a set of guiding principles to improve their relationships with vendors and future tech partners. The Institute will convene twice a year.

Currently, no fully developed smart city exists anywhere in the country and there are no clear standards or financing strategies for their formation. In an effort to help mayors make sense of the vast array of new technology tools that could address potential issues such as affordable housing, crime, public transit, and citizen engagement, the SCI will provide practical skills, resources and best practices in a peer-to-peer setting. The Institute will flip the current industry-led dynamic, positioning municipal leaders to define priorities and build a model that fast-tracks growth and efficiency for cities across the country.

"The drive to make cities 'smarter' is all about harnessing data and digital technology to meet the challenge of doing more with less. Technology alone can't solve every urban problem, but it's a powerful and cost-effective tool for helping cities accelerate progress. As natural incubators of innovation, cities have an opportunity to step up and lead at this critical time. Ultimately, the Institute is about empowering mayors to be better leaders," says USCM President Columbia (SC) Mayor Steve Benjamin.

"NYU Wagner is proud to partner with the US Conference of Mayors on this Institute," says Sherry Glied, the school's dean. "NYU and universities as whole play an important role in helping cities address today's critical public service challenges. As a recognized leader in the urban space, we are excited to collaborate with mayors here in New York City—one of the world's most vibrant urban epicenters—on their efforts to create 'smarter' cities."

The inaugural meeting of the Institute will take place on December 5 – 7, 2018. Ten mayors from across the country will convene in New York City for three days of closed-door working sessions. Featured experts will include renowned scholars, industry professionals, data officers and public officials widely recognized as leaders in the field. Mayors will construct plans tailored to their specific priorities that can then be practically implemented.

The Mayors Leadership Institute on Smart Cities is supported by Verizon, The Knight Foundation and Parsons.

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