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PlaceSpeak Announces Strategic Partnership with Socrata

As the [BC Tech Summit](#) wraps up on Tuesday, one Vancouver-based civic tech startup is taking transparency in digital democracy to a new level. A pioneer in open and authenticated civic engagement, [PlaceSpeak](#) announced a strategic partnership with [Socrata](#), a world leader in cloud solutions for open data and data-driven governments.

Socrata provides an open data framework for governments at all levels to open up their data in a machine-readable format. PlaceSpeak will partner with Socrata to make it simpler for governments to share information about rezoning and development applications in a way that can be leveraged by any business or civic group to build apps or services. PlaceSpeak will also become an early user of that standardized data, delivering timely, localized civic notifications to users in any city with a Socrata platform.

"People want to be kept informed about proposed changes in their neighbourhoods", said Colleen Hardwick, founder and CEO of PlaceSpeak Inc. "Socrata can help us access the data necessary to automate civic notifications based on location. These efforts are crucial for ensuring that citizens and residents are kept up-to-date on projects and are properly engaged in the decision-making process."

In the future, PlaceSpeak will also be able to deliver data from its public consultations directly into Socrata's open data platform, closing the engagement loop. Socrata provides a way to house and share data that is fundamentally transparent -- just like PlaceSpeak's consultation processes. By combining these two systems, trust in government and policy outcomes can be reinforced.

In addition, Socrata will be adopting PlaceSpeak's land-use change data standard, which is also being considered independently by municipalities including the City of Calgary and the City of Surrey.

"Leading governments around the world are realizing that in order to ensure better policy outcomes, they need to engage the public in the discussion, in addition to leveraging data from multiple sources," says Robin Jones, Socrata's VP of Strategic Growth.

"Through our strategic partnership with PlaceSpeak, we are able to make crucial municipal data available to citizens, automatically delivering information about land use changes. Data standards and dissemination of government data empower citizens to know what's going on in their neighbourhood and become part of the civic process."

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About PlaceSpeak

PlaceSpeak is a location-based consultation platform launched in 2011 and developed with the support of the National Research Council of Canada. PlaceSpeak has been developed to solve the problem of how to consult with people online within specific geographical boundaries. Use of the platform has expanded beyond Metro Vancouver, throughout British Columbia and across Canada, with initial consultations beginning in the USA, Northern Ireland, UK and Tasmania, Australia. For more information, please visit www.placespeak.com.

About Socrata

Socrata is the global leader in software solutions that are designed exclusively for digital government, delivering unprecedented data-driven innovation and cost savings for hundreds of public sector leaders and millions of their constituents around the world. Socrata is unleashing the power of data to improve government. To learn more about Socrata, visit www.socrata.com.

Media Contact:

Mary Leong

Communications Manager, PlaceSpeak Inc.

604-336-6977

mary@placespeak.com