City Digital Announces the Launch of Inaugural Pilot Projects, Addressing Major Urban Infrastructure Challenges With Potential for Global Impact

First set of pilots focusing on monitoring green infrastructure and mapping underground infrastructure assets will be tested and developed in Chicago.

CHICAGO, September 14, 2015 – City Digital, a Chicago-based consortium focused on data-driven urban innovation within the built environment, announced today its first live pilot projects since the consortium began earlier this year. City Digital, a UI LABS collaboration, uses Chicago as a testbed for technology and demonstration, focusing on four critical impact areas: transportation, physical infrastructure, water and sanitation, and energy management.

The inaugural pilots feature founding members of the City Digital consortium – Microsoft, Accenture, ComEd, Siemens and HBK Engineering. The launch of the pilots reflect City Digital’s mission to enable cross-sector collaboration to test joint-development and joint-deployment of real solutions for the smart city marketplace – so that once successful, can be delivered at scale to a larger market.

Two of the initial pilot projects, which will run throughout 2016, include:

- **Smart Green Infrastructure Monitoring**
  The pilot looks at the impact of identifying and examining green infrastructure installations on urban drainage foundations such as local flooding, transportation obstructions, and water contamination. The pilot will develop a low-cost sensing package backed by cloud-based reporting and analytics which will accurately report green infrastructure performance alongside existing grey infrastructure as part of a storm water management system when it is applied across future green infrastructure locations in the Chicago region.

- **Underground Infrastructure Mapping**
  The pilot focuses on developing a platform that will enable virtual mapping to help monitor underground structures, like water pipes, gas lines, power and electrical systems, subway structures, and telecommunications cabling. The goal is to overcome inefficiencies and costs created by the reliance on antiquated systems to plan and execute underground projects. The pilot will also improve underground design coordination, reduce redundant digging operations and accidental interruptions of service, increase accuracy of utility information and optimize the way this information is obtained.

City Digital is also announcing Tyco as the newest member of the consortium. Tyco, a leader in global fire safety and security solutions, will join Microsoft, Accenture, ComEd and Siemens as a top tier partner. “We are thrilled to join City Digital at UI LABS, and play a key role in the next wave of innovations that will enable the development of smart cities around the world,” says Chris Brown, Vice President for Strategy at Tyco.

City Digital’s pilot experiments are supported by a commitment from the City of Chicago to open its assets and infrastructure for technology experimentation to drive innovation and change. “Through
collaboration of our public, private and academic partners and coordination of data, City Digital will create tools to inform decision-making and improve infrastructure management,” says Brenna Berman, City of Chicago CIO and Commissioner of the Department of Innovation and Technology and a key leader of the consortium’s efforts.

Each pilot’s completion plan includes a pathway to commercialization so that successful pilots can be extended throughout Chicago and to other cities nationally and globally almost immediately.

City Digital is working on the pilots with several City of Chicago departments and agencies, including the Departments of Innovation and Technology, Water Management, Buildings, Transportation and Fleet and Facilities. The pilots also engage City Digital academic partners, including the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the University of Illinois at Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology, Northwestern University and Argonne National Laboratory.

Unique to City Digital within the growing smart city sector is the role of UI LABS as convener and collaboration platform, providing a replicable framework and neutral environment for diverse stakeholders to jointly identify and solve large infrastructure challenges, and then scale and commercialize those solutions broadly.

“The complexity and size of our pilots require the expertise and resources of multiple partners,” says Steve Fifita, City Digital’s Executive Director. “City Digital excels at orchestrating multi-party innovation between leading companies, universities, laboratories and government to create viable solutions by keenly focusing on commercialization and return on investment.”

City Digital is currently in the planning stages for a second round of pilot projects. In early October, City Digital will convene academic, corporate and civic partners and the City of Chicago to generate its second series of new topics to generate new pilots. These topics will spotlight transportation demand management, smart energy consumption tools and infrastructure monitoring.

City Digital welcomes interest from additional industry, academic and civic partners about the consortium. After curating an inaugural slate of projects in 2015, many additional projects will follow over the course of the next five years. For additional information, please visit http://www.citydigital.uilabs.org/.

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**UI LABS solves large-scale industrial challenges by forming consortia of academic, corporate and civic partners who innovate and commercialize new technology solutions. UI LABS is developing a portfolio of applied research and commercialization programs that lead to a return on investment for its partners and improve local, regional and national competitiveness. For more information on UI LABS, please visit UILABS.org.**

City Digital, UI LABS’ second lab program, will develop and test urban infrastructure solutions in Chicago that will lead to real improvements in cities across the world. Its four areas of focus include transportation, physical infrastructure, water and sanitation, and energy management. For more information on City Digital, please visit http://www.citydigital.uilabs.org/.