

Implications of Legal and Organizational Issues for Urban Digital Government Development

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This paper discusses implications of the convergence of legal and organizational issues in the context of developing and implementing digital government projects in large urban settings. By the convergence of legal and organizational issues we refer to two important aspects of urban government: (1) the close relationship between legal/policy structures and the way government is organized and functions, and (2) the way the legal/policy elements interact with organizational dynamics and work cultures to influence digital government projects (and government activities generally). It is our contention that convergence in the organizational and legal/policy context is a powerful determinant of how these projects develop and how likely they are to succeed. Therefore the understanding of this convergence and related dynamics is critically important to planning and designing both policy to promote digital government and particular digital government projects themselves. Illustrations of this convergence and its consequences are presented. They are based on research involving two digital government projects in urban settings: development of a management information system for homeless shelter administration and a developing a system for sharing information among New York City agencies.

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