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Pinzler is right to be concerned. It is a general issue, not just license plates.

On Aug 8, 2024, at 10 59 AM, Mike Martin <a href="mailto:demikemartin@outlook.com">demikemartin@outlook.com</a>> wrote

Off the wall quotion, triggered by article below What personal data does Redondo (or its contractors) collect and how is it protected? Does Redondo have a data privacy policy?

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Rain was falling steadily as the group huddled underneath umbrellas outside the Mark Twain Neighborhood Library in Long Beach in early March, equipped with their smartphones and a mission. Their goal take a "data walk" around a few blocks of the city to see various technologies - security camerus, public Wi-Fi hotspots, the library self-checkout kiosk - with signs explaining how the city collects residents' data, how it stores that information, and why.

How much does your city know about you? A lot, it turns out.

On any day in Long Beach, residents encounter dozens of technologies that collect their personal information. Some are easier to spot than others.

Police puted cars scan license plates. A camera logs how many vehicles pass through an intersection. Smart water meters track each time a resident turns on their tap. Beachqueen heading to the sand eater their license plate number and credit card information into a mobile app to pay for purking

Even in-person shopping is an opportunity for data collection. A parking structure at 2nd & PCH, the city's newest outdoor shopping mall, can tell exactly how long you've been parked there and whether or not you'll have to pay.

That's just a sliver of what officials collect. And Long Beach offers just one example of how personal data are being hoovered up by local governments statewide.

Gwen Shaffer, a professor at Cal State Long Beach who is speathcading the project in partnership with the city of Long Beach, asked participants before they launched on the stroll whether the services being provided were worth the trade-off in data privacy.

The group of roughly a dozen residents hesitated.

"That's a land question for me to answer if I'm not aware of what technology the city is in fact utilizing," 22-year-old Genevieve Vigil responded. More information, the said, could help finite some acceptance of the technologies being used and the personal data being collected.

That's exactly what researchers - and the city - are seeking to do with the recently launched digital rights platform.

The fulfillms, which is finded through a National Science Foundation great, consists of data privacy solices for nearly two does not improve deprised technologies that collect proceedly identified informations. Each sign futures at All code that then resident to an endine platform where they can be not be only on the collect process and we chealth it is do details the length of time data are stored and whether they are above or example.

"The whole project is about transparency," Shaffer said. "When the city is using data for certain purposes, they want to make sure residents understand those uses."

Ryan Kurtzman, technology partnerships officer for Long Beach, hopes the initiative will become a model for other California cities. Boston, Washington, D.C., and cities in Canada, Australia and France have rolled out similar signage on technologies in recent years

"We've known from the beginning that data privacy is something our residents are concerned about, and it's our responsibility as city government of the concerned about, and it's our responsibility as city government. nent to make sure we're being transparent about the data that's being collected, how it's being shared and how it's protected," Kur

The idea behind the digital rights platform is to move Long Beach closer to complying with the "spirit of the law," Shaffer said.

Advectors with the Center for Democracy and Technology have been pushing pulsing species to provide community members with input and choices surrounding what data are collected about them. Long Beach's failform in a positive start, but consumers about understand that the list in a sechanistic one, until Elizabeth Link, the director of equity and civic technology at the amountal transport.

Thing technology responsibly means you've conscious of the ways it can have people, especially veherable communities, "Link and," 'Due of the core tesses of being able to use technology responsibly in the firsting mechanism of elling people what you've doing."

During the March data walk, the residents' first stop was the self-checkout kiosk at the public library.

The group traveled outside into the rain where the technologies - the city's bike share programs, public Wi-Fi hotspot and a security camera afficed to a light pole high above Mac Arthur Park - got a bit more sophisticated and, for some, twishing. The security camera, which captures video that can be accessed by law enforcement, made Vigil uneasy.

Long Beach police launched a review in 2020 and determined that an employee had inadverteatly granted ICE access to automated license plate reader data through its vendors' "group approval" feature, the agency said at the time

"The surveillance that's in the park, it's stored indefinitely, and it's assumed that there will always be good actors that are handling that information," Vigil said. "But I don't know that."

Researchers are seeking another round of funding to develop a privacy assistant mobile app that will give residents the ability to set privacy preferences, if feasible, when they ex-

If funded, the app would enable residents to opt out of data collection in some instances, Shaffer said. They also would be able to set their preferences for how often they're notified about certain smart technologies around them

"We want to show this is a way for cities to boost trust among their residents," Kurtzman said. "I believe that cities have a responsibility to be open and honest about the technologies they are using."