Metropolitan Policy Program
at BROOKINGS

New report reveals challenges and opportunities in modernizing government's approach to land use and transportation data

Washington, D.C. — A new report from the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program explores why, even with the availability of ever-increasing sets of sophisticated geo-coded data and rapidly developing computing capacity, governments lack critical systems, processes, and regulatory flexibility to use them effectively for public transportation and land use planning.

The substantial penetration of connected devices into everyday life—from smartphones in individual pockets to fixed equipment in public spaces—offer untold potential to understand how people move and where they do business on a daily basis. However, most public agencies cannot leverage all the data the marketplace produces. To address this wide-ranging public sector problem, Adie Tomer and Ranjitha Shivaram have published *Modernizing government's approach to transportation and land use data: Challenges and opportunities*, a report which outlines the structural, but surmountable, challenges governments experience integrating new data and techniques into decisionmaking processes.

This report is an early step in designing a data-focused playbook for public agencies to consider the next stage of planning and investment in local built environments, adjustments which will require modernized regulatory approaches to data procurement and use. The report includes one of the clearest catalogs of emerging data sources related to transportation and land use. Based on interviews with other experts, it also describes the challenges to integrating new datasets and proposes policy reforms to address them.

"In a world increasingly filled with geospatial sensors, practically every action and movement we make throughout our day is tracked," says Adie Tomer, lead author. "While private industry continues to develop innovative data products at an unprecedented rate, the public sector has been playing catch-up in collecting and using all that data effectively. There is reason for optimism, however, with an understanding that the door is open for government agencies to upgrade their approaches, helping to elevate their communities through new forms of public-private data partnerships and modernized policy frameworks."

###

The **Metropolitan Policy Program** at Brookings delivers research and solutions to help metropolitan leaders build an advanced economy that works for all. To learn more, please visit www.brookings.edu/metro. Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/brookingsmetro.