ONIT PARTNERS WITH SDOT TO LAUNCH DATA 2025 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Issue:

SDOT needed a coordinated approach to manage its expanding data resources and align with the City of Seattle's "One Seattle" Data Strategy. Lacking department-wide governance structures, teh department faced barriers to cross-team data sharing, limited awareness of existing datasets, and difficulty transforming information into strategic insight. As the demand for data-driven decision-making grew, the need for a unified and sustainable governance model had become increasingly urgent.

Strategy:

Onit was engaged to help SDOT launch Data 2025, a multi-year initiative designed to establish a unified data governance framework and cultivate an agency-wide culture of data collaboration. The engagement aimed to transform SDOT's approach to information management by improving how data was organized, shared, and applied in decision—making. To achieve this, Onit focused on developing a strong and recognizable project identity, building early and meaningful stakeholder engagement, and designing sustainable structures to support long-term data stewardship. This strategic foundation ensured that Data 2025 would not only address immediate operational challenges but also embed enduring practices that advanced transparency, equity, and efficiency across the department.

Solution:

Working with the project Steering Committee, Onit guided the discovery and planning phases of the Data 2025 initiative. The team began by building awareness, branding the program as Data 2025 to create urgency and focus.

To engage staff and promote collaboration, Onit designed and facilitated a "Data Treasure Hunt", an interactive Microsoft Teams activity that encouraged SDOT divisions to identify and share datasets, uncovering "data gold" across departments and helping to break down long-standing silos.

Building on this momentum, Onit authored the Data 2025 Framework, a comprehensive blueprint that defined the business case, governance standards, and implementation roadmap in alignment with the City of Seattle's "One Seattle" principles.

Onit then developed a tailored People Architecture, grounded in Data Management Book of Knowledge (DMBOK) principles, to outline roles, hierarchies, communication paths, and key competencies required to sustain governance efforts.

Finally, Onit defined foundational governance structures for the program, outlining the Data Governance Advisory Group and Sub-Committee, and providing both with Charters and participant guides covering critical topics such as Data Quality, Data Literacy and Culture, Data Equity, and Community Engagement.

Results:

Through Onit's facilitation, SDOT now has a clear and branded program identity that drives visibility and engagement. The Data 2025 initiative has increased stakeholder participation and agency-wide awareness of data assets, strengthening collaboration and information sharing. A tailored governance framework, supported by dedicated groups and detailed charters, now underpins long-term accountability, equity, and transparency. This positions SDOT to enhance decision-making and advance the City's commitment to data-driven government.