

Street Bump — Boston's Smartphone Pothole-Sensing Pilot and Its Crowdsourcing Limits

City Innovation Library · Good practice · United States of America

Quality score: 48/100

Evidence strength: Moderate

Summary

Boston's Street Bump app used phone accelerometers to detect road defects; an open contest with 700+ solvers improved the algorithm and the city reports fixing 1,250 worst manhole covers, but most reports still came from city staff.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of impact / measured results	1/3
Transferability / demonstrated replication	2/3
Scalability	1/3
Sustainability / continuity	1/3
Innovation	2/3
Inclusiveness / equity	1/3
Multi-stakeholder collaboration	2/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-10-08

[Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics, City of Boston](#) — accessed 2026-10-08

[City of Boston: Street Bump](#) — accessed 2026-10-08

[Harvard D3: Street Bump — crowdsourcing better streets, but many roadblocks remain](#) — accessed 2026-10-08

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