Australian Smart Communities Association (ASCA)
Information and Facts about Smart Cities

Australian Smart Communities Association (ASCA) is Australia's only not-for profit peak body dedicated to advocating on behalf of governments for smart communities in Australia. Since starting in 2010 ASCA has represented more than 150 different local government authorities which collectively represent 12.6 million Australians. ASCA works closely with our members across all levels of government to solve problems, enhance policy, capacity, confidence, and create innovative smart solutions that help improve the livability and convenience in their communities.

Over recent weeks ASCA has been made aware of a series of unsubstantiated claims regarding "20 minute cities" and "Smart Cities" which suggest they are part of an elaborate government plan to restrict the freedom of people. These claims are not based on fact and appear designed to mislead people for the purpose of pushing forward another undisclosed agenda.

The term '20 minute City' is a well-established city planning concept used globally and is focused on improving liveability and providing more choices for communities.

A good definition is available on the Planning Victoria website here:
https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/planning-for-melbourne/plan-melbourne/20-minute-neighbourhood

The term 'Smart City' has been around for many years and is akin to the use of 'Smart' to describe digital technology such as 'Smart Phone', 'Smart Watch', 'Smart home', 'Smart Device' etc, which is effectively a digitally enhanced version of something we are familiar with. While there are several definitions available to describe a Smart City, ASCA's preference is to use the term 'Smart Community', as it acknowledges that creating benefits for people in our communities should be the priority.

Our definition of a Smart Community is:

A smart community is one that uses information technology, innovation and data to be more efficient, solve problems, and create new opportunities for people, businesses, and organisations. A smart community enables improved service delivery, economic development, and liveability with a reduced environmental footprint.

For any Councils or organisations that may currently be receiving some unorthodox queries about their Smart Community / Smart City programs we recommend that you explain in simple, practical terms what your own definition of a 'Smart Community / City' means and support that with examples of smart technologies and solutions that are improving the liveability of your local community.

Some examples could be:
- Public Wi-Fi networks
- Digital way-finding kiosks
- Smart Parking sensors and applications
- Digital signage
- Public art enhanced by Augmented Reality
- Air quality monitoring sensors
- Smart water irrigation systems for parks
- Smart Public Lighting
- Smart public barbeque maintenance

ASCA welcomes respectful and informed dialogue on the issues, concerns and benefits of Smart Technologies for our local communities. Our national network of members across Australia are committed to driving the positive impact of digital transformation while ensuring people and communities remain at the heart of what we do.

Contact ASCA today to learn more about the benefits of smart communities and how we can help you on your journey.

Learn more on the ASCA website:
https://www.australiansmartcommunities.org.au

Or contact us via email:
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