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FUTURE 2015



John Tolva, former Chief Technology Officer, the City of Chicago

John led the development of 'The City of Chicago Technology Plan' an initiative that sets forth a series of public-private strategies to accelerate economic growth, build educated and digitally-engaged communities and workforce, improve government services, and reduce costs through technology.

In 2012, the White House recognized John as a 'Champion of Change' as part of a group of creative individuals engaged in building stronger communities through innovative approaches to problem-solving. Prior to joining the City, he was Director of Citizenship and Technology at IBM Corp, where he worked on the firm's 'smarter cities' initiative, advising cities how to incorporate data analytics into planning and operations. John led the City Forward project, the first global aggregator and visualizer of urban data sets. In 2006 he was honored as one of '40 Under 40' in the business community by Crain's Chicago Business.

Currently John is president of PositivEnergy Practice, an urban systems engineering firm based on data-driven decision-making for sustainable new building design, retrofits, and urban master planning. John's career has focused on development and application of technology to improving the urban environment.