$80k in Prizes Awarded to Entrepreneurs and Developers in First NTx Apps Challenge

Innovation competition brings together cities and entrepreneurs to solve growth challenges

North Texas – The inaugural NTx Apps Challenge awarded $80,000 to five teams of web entrepreneurs who created sustainability apps to address four key municipal growth challenges; water conservation, waste and recycling, smart energy, and transportation. The winners were announced Friday, Oct. 17 during an award ceremony at The Treehouse in Addison.

The winners of the NTx Apps Challenge are:

- **Smart Energy: "Energy Pal"** – A mobile app for Android that displays real-time electricity usage to homeowners and allows users to track the electric usage of individual appliances. Developed by Ian Macalinao (Student at University of Texas at Dallas), Brandon Truong (Student at Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science), Dylan Macalinao (Student at School for the Talented and Gifted), and Adil Virani (Student at Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science).

- **Water Conservation: "Sprink.ly"** – A web-app and smart sprinkler system that incorporates weather data, neighborhood water usage, and even municipal water restrictions to prevent overwatering of residential lawns. Developed by Michael Erdahl and Urmil Shah, both engineers at Texas Instruments.
- **Transportation: "Juxt"** – A mobile app for iOS that allows drivers of alternative fuel vehicles to find fueling stations, parking spaces, and other points of interest along their route, and share this information with other app users. Developed by: Gerard Matthew, Priyanka Sharma, and Harish Upadhyayula.
- **Waste and Recycling: "Compost Denton"** – A municipal composting service that uses a web-app to manage customers, weight tracking of materials composted, route optimization for drivers, and environmental monitoring of compost piles. Created by Andrew Miller and Thomas Wild, Co-Founders of Compost Denton.
- **The Internet of Things: "GridLock"** – A smart traffic light network that adjusts traffic light schedules to optimizes traffic flow, through real-time monitoring and analysis of traffic conditions. Developed by Zedd Mekhaiel and James Staud.

Each winning submission received the following prize package:

- Cash: $10k cash upfront
- Follow-on funding: An additional $10k in follow-on funding for continued development and work on the app available to the winners in the Water Conservation, Transportation, and Waste & Recycling category.
- Mentorship: Each winning team is paired with mentors from local technology companies Bottle Rocket, Gemalto, or Velocis to help further develop their app and bring it to market.

- Office space: Teams are provided with desks at local co-working spaces: The Dallas Entrepreneurship Center (The DEC), IDEAWorks FW, Addiosn Treehouse, Fort Work, and nōd
- Post-Challenge Showcase: Winning teams get to pitch their creation in a special showcase during the November edition of Dallas New Tech

Launched in late July, the NTx Apps Challenge is a 10-week app development competition designed to generate innovative software-based solutions and companies to make North Texas more livable and sustainable. Through a series of "hackathons" and "data jams," participants worked on their apps collaboratively with representatives from local governments and technology companies, as well as workshops on app development, coding and business skills from local experts.

On October 6th at the Grove, eighteen teams presented their completed projects to the Challenge Judges, who included Garrett Boone (Co-founder of The Container Store), Trey Bowles (Co-founder of the Dallas Entrepreneurship Center), Jorge Varela (Assistant Director at TECH Fort Worth), Carole Davis (Water Conservation Division Manager for Dallas Water Utilities), Laurent Assaf (Director of Business Development, Gemalto), and others.

"More than just a competition, NTx Apps is a unique public-private partnership that brings together the best minds in technology, entrepreneurship, and municipal government to solve some critical issues our region is facing," said Robert Kent, NTx Apps Challenge Co-Founder and Director of Public Policy for the North Texas Commission. "We hope to see more collaborative efforts like this in the future to create innovative solutions for North Texas's toughest challenges."

"The NTX community answered the call to tackle challenges facing our region. I'm pleased to see the both the caliber of talent and the solutions conceived," say Blake Burris, CEO of The Cleanweb Initiative, "It is my hope that winners

create companies that become scalable companies ultimately impacting our region – environmentally and economically."

NTx Apps is the first app challenge of this scale in Texas, and is modeled after several successful programs in New York City and San Diego. Major prizes for the Challenge are sponsored by Dallas Water Utilities, Dallas Sanitation Services Department, The City of Denton, Gemalto, Garrett Boone and the North Texas Commission. Additional sponsors the Dallas Entrepreneurship Center ("The DEC"), University of North Texas's Discovery Park, Dialexa, Socrata, Bottle Rocket Apps, AT&T Foundry, and community partners Launch DFW, Dallas New Tech, Techmill Denton, The Grove, IDEA Works FW, the City of Addison, UNT Innovation Greenhouse, Code Collective, Earth People Media, DFW Excellerator and Collide Village.

About the North Texas Commission:

Established in 1971, the North Texas Commission is a regional non-profit consortium of businesses, cities, counties, chambers of commerce, economic development entities and higher education institutions in the North Texas Region. The North Texas Commission improves the economic vitality, infrastructure and lifestyle of North Texas by marketing the region, promoting collaboration and advocating on critical issues.

About The Cleanweb Initiative:

The Cleanweb Initiative is a member-driven organization composed of developers, entrepreneurs, investors, and enterprises large and small who believe that the growing web of information technologies may be our most powerful – and profitable – tool to improve global sustainability, economic prosperity, and human well-being. Cleanweb activities now span 20 countries. Founding partners of The Cleanweb Initiative include Facebook, The American Clean Skies Foundation, Sidecar and the Spring Forward Foundation. Learn more at www.cleanweb.co

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