

Bogotá and Cali: Paving a new path towards transparency in public infrastructure in Colombia

The Colombian members of CoST, Bogotá and Santiago de Cali, received honourable mentions in the Open Government Partnership's (OGP) Open Gov Challenge 2025 for their commitment to driving ambitious transformations that strengthen transparency, participation and accountability in public infrastructure investment.

CoST – the Infrastructure Transparency Initiative – is a leading global non-profit that works with governments, civil society, and the private sector to help ensure that when governments spend money on infrastructure the process is transparent, money is used efficiently, and the infrastructure built meets community needs.

This recognition did not reward a single platform or pilot. Instead, it acknowledged deeper institutional shifts underway in both cities: opening up how public infrastructure investments are planned, delivered, and monitored – and doing so in a way which helps rebuild over a decade of trust lost by their citizens.

In Bogotá, the implementation of the CoST approach has enabled progress towards a public infrastructure management model based on open data, traceability and inter-institutional coordination, within a complex and highly decentralised environment. In Cali, CoST membership has supported the evolution of existing public debt and investment monitoring reforms into the infrastructure sector; providing legitimacy, structure, and innovation as those reforms scale to deliver better infrastructure and services to citizens.



Key lessons:

1. The CoST approach strategically leverages legitimacy and global networks:

The network of international good practice and recognition from the CoST approach can provide political buy-in and momentum for reforms; sending a strong signal to citizens that there is evidence-based action behind the ambitions. In Cali, CoST helped legitimise the expansion of existing openness reforms in infrastructure, whilst in Bogotá it has helped to consolidate an institutional agenda for transparency in infrastructure.

2. Anchoring transparency in issues that really matter to the public:

Reforms gain traction when linked to everyday infrastructure challenges. In Bogotá, transport projects—such as Metro Line—have generated significant public interest. While in Cali, linking open governance to the road network, which citizens identified as being a major priority area, has improved engagement.

3. Standardising data and governance to scale up reforms:

Applying CoST-aligned data standards and embedding multi-stakeholder oversight makes transparency reforms scalable and resilient. Bogotá’s adoption of CoST’s data standards has created a common framework for publishing infrastructure information across different organisations more quickly, whilst both cities move towards formalising multi-stakeholder governance that underpins oversight and data quality.

4. Designing citizen-oriented tools that facilitate participation:

Transparency through publishing data is a key part of the puzzle, but data must be accessible and usable to drive accountability. Cali’s platform enables citizens to submit geolocated images to the maintenance team and follow real-time updates via their ‘maintenance map’ on infrastructure projects. In Bogotá, the development of tools such as [Infraestructura Transparente](#) has facilitated the use of public information, strengthening social oversight and fostering a closer and more transparent relationship between citizens, stakeholder groups and the administration.

Strengthening a municipal open data system for infrastructure in Bogotá

With 62 public bodies authorised to contract infrastructure projects, the Colombian capital, Bogotá, faces a coordination challenge comparable to that of a national government. Before joining CoST, information on public infrastructure was fragmented and difficult to use for both citizens and the government bodies themselves.

“In 2024, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) recognised the efforts of the District Administration to consolidate the city’s strategic projects into a single public consultation platform. “This integrated approach had not previously been implemented in Bogotá and was achieved with technical support from CoST,” says Carolina Gaez, from the General Secretariat of the Mayor’s Office of Bogotá and CoST Bogota Manager.

This platform subsequently evolved — also with technical support from CoST — into the updated version of [Infraestructura Transparente](#), launched in May 2025.

In the first year since the launch of the updated platform¹ utilising CoST’s international data standards data has been published on 184 strategic infrastructure projects, with a total value of around 5 billion US dollars.



“We are consolidating a model of public management where information on infrastructure is an accessible, useful and understandable public good. Transparency is not just about publishing data; it is about ensuring that this data generates value, strengthens social control and improves decision-making”

Miguel Silva Moyano, Secretary General, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá.

¹ Between May 2025 and May 2026.

“Infrastructure is one of the main areas where the relationship between the state and the public comes to the fore. That is why ensuring transparency in strategic projects is essential to restoring trust,” says Miguel Silva Moyano, Secretary General of the Mayor’s Office of Bogotá

Fostering an interest in transparency

Bogotá recognises that achieving transparency requires more than just a technical change; it also demands a cultural shift that supports the publication and use of data.

An important step towards this goal has been bringing together multiple stakeholders from the public sector, private sector and civil society to raise awareness about data publication. To this end, the Mayor’s Office of Bogotá held workshops attended by senior government representatives, contracting entities from the transport sector such as RENOBO (Bogotá Urban Renewal and Development), Metro and the Urban Development Institute (IDU), as well as civil society organisations and international partners.

“To bring all the city’s contracting bodies into alignment, it was necessary to carry out extensive awareness-raising work,” says Manuel González Caballero, CoST’s senior regional director for Latin America.

The British Embassy in Colombia and the Colombian Infrastructure Chamber, which represents around 700 businesses including FIDIC member associations, have also supported the initiative from the outset, helping to build broader engagement.

In this context, Infraestructura Transparente is establishing itself as a strategic tool for strengthening the monitoring of the physical and financial progress of works in near real time, improving project traceability and evidence-based decision-making by entities and oversight bodies.

Bogotá is applying these same principles of multi-stakeholder working and monitoring to one of its most significant infrastructure investments: the Bogotá Metro Line 2 project, valued at approximately USD 7–8 billion. Under a framework agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank, CoST, through its International Secretariat, is serving as independent auditor for the project, supporting the design and implementation of a robust probity protocol and overseeing key stages of the prequalification process to strengthen transparency, integrity and public confidence from the earliest stages of delivery. More than 45 companies participated in one-on-one meetings



Miguel Silva Moyano, Secretary General of the Mayor’s Office of Bogota, and Mayor of Bogotá, Carlos Fernando Galán, making a public announcement on waste management services

during the structured market engagement phase, reflecting strong international interest and reinforcing the credibility, competitiveness and accountability of the process. This experience demonstrates how Bogotá is embedding transparency and independent oversight not only through open data publication, but also across the governance and delivery of major infrastructure projects.

“We are moving towards a more preventive control model, based on open data and analytics, which allows us to anticipate risks, improve project management and strengthen accountability. Transparency in infrastructure not only facilitates monitoring, but also enables a more direct and trust-based relationship between citizens and the administration,” says Miguel Silva Moyano, Secretary General of the Mayor’s Office of Bogotá.

Building trust in public infrastructure in Cali



Luz Adriana Vásquez Trujillo, Cali's Secretary for Infrastructure

Cali joined CoST in May 2025, after taking its first step to infrastructure transparency through the Secretariat of Infrastructure implementing its open government strategy in 2024. Membership of CoST helped give legitimacy to taking this reform to the next level.

The size of the trust and infrastructure investment challenge in Cali is considerable. According to the [Cali Cómo Vamos](#) citizen perception survey 2024, 41% of Cali residents surveyed expressed dissatisfaction in “how public resources are invested by the Mayor’s Office.” 71% stated that there should be greater transparency in contracting processes and 34% demanded that access to public information should be improved.

This naturally led to look at the CoST approach - where transparency through data publication is one of the key pillars - as part of the solution.

The government of Cali faced a challenge to improve public sentiment and trust whilst delivering the substantial investment of public infrastructure required. They were determined to properly manage the largest public loan in Cali’s 500-year history to finance 35 regeneration projects across the city between 2025 and 2027.

“Of 3,000 kilometres of thoroughfares in Cali, 1,700 are in a bad condition [...] there had been no maintenance for 30 years,” says Luz Adriana Vásquez Trujillo, Cali’s Secretary for Infrastructure

The Mayor’s Office’s first step to infrastructure transparency, and addressing these concerns, was launching its *InfraestructuraParaTodos* (“Infrastructure for everyone”) portal in 2024 to improve access to information about public infrastructure contracts, as well as public participation in the real-time monitoring of public infrastructure works.

Using CoST to innovate

Building upon this, the Mayor's Office recognised that the CoST approach would be fundamental to providing legitimacy, continuous improvement, methodological support, and access to international good practice to help expand and structure further infrastructure transparency reforms.

The published data showed that the majority of their public infrastructure contracts were given to a few suppliers, signalling a need to create a better business environment to increase competition levels. Through taking action to attract a greater pool of bidders through holding workshops to raise interest before publishing tenders, and the general steps to increasing transparency and market confidence, they saw a 300% increase² in the average number of bidders per tender.

"The good results of these open government, open data, and transparency practices under the new administration's open government strategy were what motivated us to expand and professionalize the work, including becoming part of the CoST initiative," says Santiago Sanchez, Advisor at the Infrastructure Secretary of Cali and CoST Cali Manager.

The Mayor's Office has co-developed with civil society, businesses and the media new ways for the published data to be used. A feedback system was created, which encourages citizens to send photos of areas where infrastructure is not fit for purpose, through an easy to use form, as well as a [maintenance map](#) on infrastructure projects around the city – where for the first time citizens can know in real time where infrastructure crews are around the city and what they are doing.

“The platform pushed us towards CoST to develop the tools to expand it”

Luz Adriana Vásquez Trujillo, Cali's Secretary for Infrastructure.



Luz Adriana Vásquez Trujillo, Cali's Secretary for Infrastructure, supervising the improvement works of a road in Cali

“The impact CoST membership brings to the Department of Infrastructure's work is vital. [...] CoST helps to lend legitimacy to our transparency reforms.”

Santiago Sanchez, Advisor at the Infrastructure Secretary of Cali and CoST Cali Manager

² From 20 companies participating to now more than 80, based on figures by the Mayor's Office, Cali.

CoST as a legitimiser of transparency

“The impact CoST membership brings to the Department of Infrastructure’s work is vital,” says Sanchez. “Our work is disruptive and transforming. There have been local detractors and opposition, from technical working groups to political actors. CoST helps to lend legitimacy to our transparency reforms.”

This legitimacy has helped the Department of Infrastructure embed transparency reforms more securely, enabling continued political backing, greater engagement from suppliers, and stronger collaboration with other public entities working on infrastructure.

Sanchez explains that being able to point to similar reforms undertaken by cities across Latin America and globally through the CoST network has helped demonstrate the value of the work locally, lifting it out of isolation and making it more attractive to infrastructure procurement entities and businesses.

They have held “sensitisation meetings” with key stakeholders which have been central to building momentum and expanding adoption, says Sanchez. Further engagement is planned and also they are keen to utilise the strong network across other Latin America CoST members to share experience and good practice.

“This alliance [with CoST] marks the starting point for continued innovation in open infrastructure, where the power of monitoring and control is within reach of every citizen. It also presents an opportunity to replicate best practices in the city, the region, and the country,” states the City of Cali’s website.



Cali and Bogotá receiving their honourable mentions at the OGP Global Summit

Next steps

Looking forwards, both members are focused on continuing to increase data publication and cementing a Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG) to increase momentum and stability of infrastructure data publication.

As a next step, the Mayor's Office of Bogotá plans to embrace the capability of artificial intelligence to automate processes and improve consistency of information, as well as incorporating advanced analytics to enable the early identification of alerts and predictive analysis to help understand and mitigate delivery issues early, and then use this information in decision making on future infrastructure investments. These advancements will not only allow data to be used by a wide range of stakeholders in monitoring infrastructure projects, but will also further strengthen the use of this information by decision makers in government - improving accountability and strengthening public trust.

"The CoST approach has great potential to enhance transparency in public works in Bogotá, through institutional coordination and the active participation of citizens and stakeholder groups, as the basis for a more open, trustworthy and citizen-led approach to public affairs." Carolina Gaez García, General Secretariat of the Mayor's Office of Bogotá and CoST Bogotá Manager, 2025.

Cali is also focused on increasing citizen participation and awareness across a range of stakeholders on how to use the published data. They are aspiring to learn from CoST members internationally to utilise the CoST methodology to integrate functionality into their platform to monitor the full life cycle of infrastructure projects, from planning and tendering to delivery and auditing.

"CoST opens up a range of opportunities for us, but the greatest is undoubtedly to continue innovating. The experience of the last two years shows us that transformation is possible when we collaborate with other stakeholders," Luz Adriana Vázquez Trujillo, Secretary of Infrastructure, City of Cali and the chief strategist behind the Department of Infrastructure's transparency reforms.

“ For this administration, transparency is not merely a formal requirement: it is a management tool. It enables us to anticipate risks, make better decisions and raise standards in public administration.”

Miguel Silva Moyano, Secretary General of the Mayor's Office of Bogotá.

“ In CoST, we found an ally.”

Luz Adriana Vázquez Trujillo, Secretary of Infrastructure, City of Cali.

To find out more about Bogotá's infrastructure transparency work, take a look at Bogotá's [website](#)

For more on Cali's transparency initiatives, take a look at the Cali [website](#)

or

For more details or any enquiries about CoST's programmes, please email: cost@infrastructuretransparency.org