



BUILDING RESPONSIBLY WITH AI: Our Guiding Principles

Please read the following statement regarding mySidewalk's commitments and plans to innovate and leverage artificial intelligence to enhance our data storytelling platform and tools.

What we believe

We believe anyone who cares about a place should be able to use data to create positive change there. We also believe that the thoughtful application of AI to community data makes this possible.

The centrality of our data

Over the past 10 years, we've cultivated an accurate, reliable, and valuable community data asset of more than 4 billion data points—a data asset we call WhereHouse. WhereHouse is foundational to all of mySidewalk's offerings, and our AI features reference it. We work to ensure that when AI leverages our data to produce a result, it is as accurate as possible. However, we also encourage our customers to review every AI result for accuracy and acceptability.



Our guiding principles

mySidewalk puts into practice the following principles to help ensure that our tools promote ethical and inclusive use of data and data storytelling.

We build for people seeking positive change in the world.

Our mission is to build tools for changemakers, particularly those individuals and organizations focused on reducing health and wealth inequities in their communities. When AI is used by people with aligned goals, who direct it towards meaningful problems, the risk of misuse decreases while new capabilities are unlocked for humanity's problem solvers.

We're democratizing a robust and reliable community data asset.

WhereHouse, mySidewalk's community data asset, is comprised of thousands of raw data tables gathered from scores of data sources. In their raw form, these records document people, places, and the built environment, but are mostly inaccessible to those who need them. In our effort to build tools that fix this, we only collect raw data from sources that:

- Are transparent about data collection procedures
- Provide definitions and methodology explanations
- Get consent to collect data

Most of the raw data we acquire is anonymized. For data for which an individual can be identified, it must meet the stated criteria and be in the public record.

Product inclusion is critical to achieving our mission.

Our customers are community leaders and community builders. They're local governments, community foundations, civic organizations, and community-minded businesses.



They fund community-based projects, like playspaces and broadband. They're convenors who facilitate collective impact toward shared goals. As such, their most important audience is the general public; so it's ours too.

This means that when deciding what to build and how to build it, we:

- Think deeply about who may be excluded from the tools and data we build, and work to center these people as we design and refine solutions.
- Consider all the aspects of identity, including race, ethnicity, age, ability, geography, culture, education, and more.
- Seek to involve people with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences, especially those from historically underrepresented groups, in shaping our products and services.
- Advocate for more equitable data collection practices alongside many of our customers

We will use AI to advance our mission and be accountable to our customers and the communities they serve.

mySidewalk uses OpenAI to build AI features and products. Like all current foundation models, OpenAI's models have been trained on large swaths of the Internet, including websites, news articles, books, research articles, and more. Because this data reflects societal biases, the models can have racial, gender, cultural, and other biases, too.

OpenAI is taking steps to address the potential for harm, and mySidewalk closely follows their progress. We also recognize the responsibility of our company, customers, and individual users to do our part. As it has always been, it is only through collective effort that we can combat biases of all kinds. That is why, for the ethical use of AI, we must all work together.



What we know about OpenAI's efforts is that they're:

- Employing human reviewers to fine-tune datasets to help remove some of the biases introduced in the original training data
- Working to improve ChatGPT's default behavior by researching bias detection and mitigation methods
- Enabling customers, including software companies like mySidewalk, to easily customize ChatGPT's behaviors according to their AI values
- Soliciting public input on system behavior, disclosure mechanisms (such as watermarking), and deployment policies more broadly
- Developing AI Fairness 360(AIF360), an open-source toolkit that assists developers in detecting and addressing bias in AI systems
- Exploring partnerships with external organizations to conduct third-party audits of our safety and policy efforts

Here are some steps mySidewalk is taking:

- Driving awareness of potential AI misuses and biases, particularly in the context of mySidewalk use cases, within our team and our customer base more broadly
- Offering internal education to help our team become more knowledgeable about relevant ethical AI considerations and practical tools for ethical use within their roles
- Adopting development methods and techniques, like in-context learning and retrieval-augmented generation, that help mitigate data inaccuracies and the risk of negatively biased outputs
- Keeping informed of any changes to or issues that might develop with respect to OpenAI's approach to building AI responsibly
- Communicating transparently about an AI feature's intended use, capabilities, and current limitations so customers can make informed decisions



We encourage customers and individual users to:

- Educate yourself on both the promise and the potential harms of AI, and explore strategies for navigating this landscape in your work
- Get to know your organization’s guidelines around the use of AI
- Manually review each AI-generated result for accuracy, appropriateness, and compliance with your organization’s guidance on acceptable use
- Let audiences for your data stories know if the content was generated by AI
- Inform mySidewalk of AI-generated results that include inaccuracies, biased ideas or language, or otherwise concern you for any reason

Again, it will take everyone to ensure the ethical use of AI—from the makers of the models to the companies that build tools with them and the people who use those tools to achieve positive outcomes for their communities. mySidewalk commits to prioritizing equity and inclusion in how we build with AI and communicate transparently about the capabilities and current limitations of every tool we release.

Finally, we take customer feedback on the use of AI seriously and always do what we can to address concerns and meet the high ethical standards you expect. Please reach out to your customer success representative or email us at hello@mysidewalk.com, with questions and/or feedback.

Thank you,

The mySidewalk Team

The platform for people who care about places.

