OCTOBER 2026 | REGIONAL NEWSLETTER

THE CONNECTED CITY REVIEW

Where fiber, data and urban intelligence converge.



Contextual CGI / conceptual illustration

18 NEWS DEVELOPMENTS / 13 COUNTRIES / 6 FEATURE STORIES

A curated publication for the Fiber Connect Council MENA Smart City Committee, covering the Middle East, North Africa and Southern Europe.

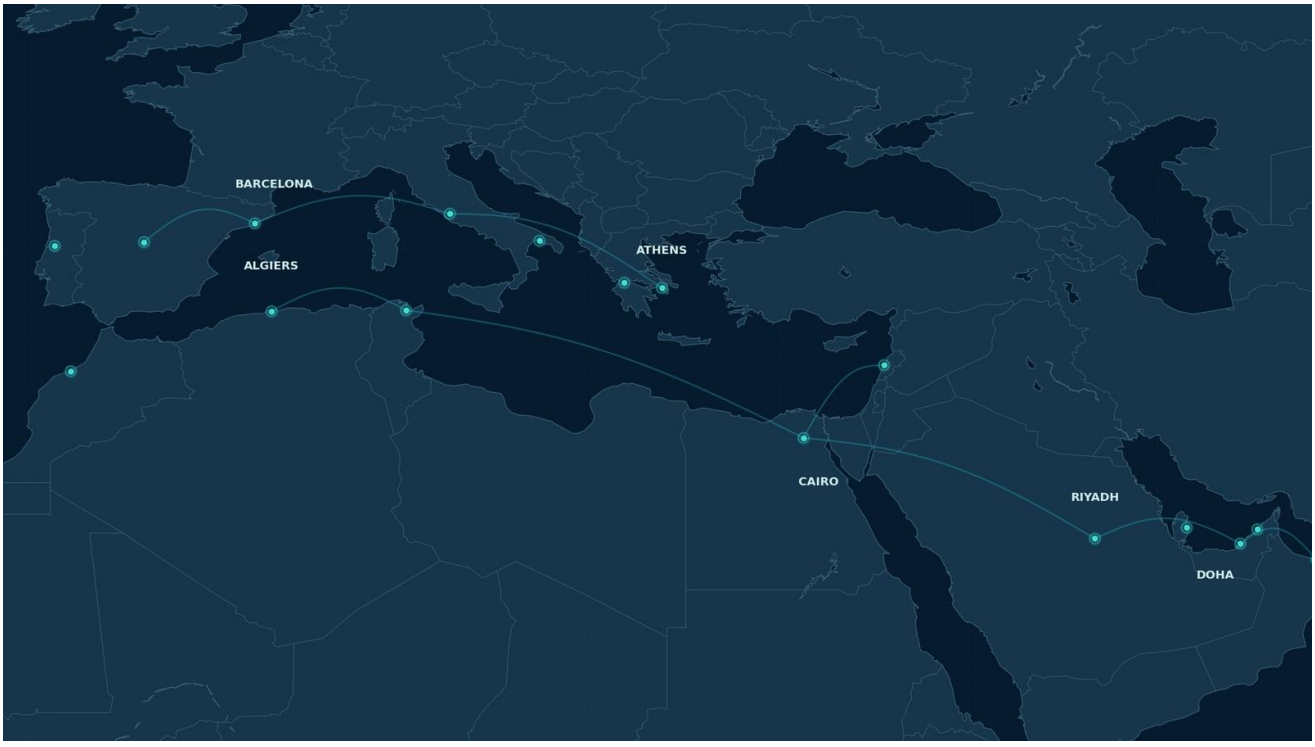
EDITORIAL

Infrastructure is the beginning. Outcomes are the measure.

Across the Middle East, North Africa and Southern Europe, smart-city development is increasingly defined by how well connectivity, digital assets, data platforms and public services operate together—not by the number of technology installations announced.

This edition surveys 18 developments across 13 countries, from Algeria's FTTH expansion to smart transport in Abu Dhabi, geospatial collaboration in Dubai and AI-driven visitor services in Doha. It also looks at the new compute, fiber-backbone and shared urban-platform initiatives emerging across North Africa and Southern Europe.

The Committee's guiding proposition is straightforward: fiber connectivity is strategic enabling infrastructure for scalable, interoperable and resilient urban operations. However, outcomes depend equally on governance, cybersecurity, integration and a clear operating model.



Conceptual: connected regional urban systems.

THIS ISSUE

- Featured reports: Algeria, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Riyadh, Doha and Barcelona
- Middle East: municipal analytics, unified services and Lebanon FTTH policy
- North Africa: sovereign AI compute, urban innovation and SmartSDG
- Southern Europe: shared municipal platforms, backbone fiber and digital ports
- Committee insights: connected-city architecture and five implementation priorities

FEATURED REPORTS

ALGERIA | 11 OCT 2026 | ACHIEVED

Four million FTTH subscriptions mark a new access milestone



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

Algeria announced that its fiber-to-the-home base had passed the four-million-subscription threshold in October 2026. The figure, compared with about 2.6 million subscriptions in December 2025, signals a major acceleration in fixed broadband access. Authorities also indicated an ambition to exceed 4.4 million subscriptions before year-end. For city planners and operators, the significance extends beyond homes connected: wider fiber availability improves the foundation for digital public services, cloud adoption, connected buildings and future municipal platforms.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Fiber access at scale is an essential enabling layer—not itself a complete smart-city solution.

Original announcement: https://www.aps.dz/fr/algerie/education-et-technologie/mv3wajsv-l-algerie-atteint-le-seuil-des-4-millions-de-foyers-raccordes-a-la-ftth

UAE · ABU DHABI | 02 OCT 2026 | CONTRACT AWARDED

Abu Dhabi commits more than AED 300 million to smart public transport



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

Abu Dhabi Mobility announced an investment exceeding AED 300 million in next-generation public transport technology, with Conduent awarded the project contract. The programme includes automated fleet management and digital fare collection, connecting vehicles, operators and passengers through more integrated services. It shows how mobility transformation depends on systems that work together—not isolated vehicle upgrades. Reliable links between the field network, payment systems and operational platforms will be central to execution.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Secure, available communications underpin real-time fleet control, payment processing and coordinated operations.

Original announcement: https://www.mediaoffice.abudhabi/en/transport/integrated-transport-centre-abu-dhabi-mobility-announces-aed300m-investment-in-next-generation-public-transport-systems/

UAE · DUBAI | 04 OCT 2026 | COLLABORATION

Dubai joins international digital twin collaboration



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

Dubai Municipality has joined the international Digital Twin Consortium, advancing cooperation on digital representations of the built environment. The initiative is aimed at urban planning, geospatial data and infrastructure asset management. Membership is a collaboration milestone rather than a claim of a completed citywide twin. The practical challenge ahead is to connect trusted datasets and field assets to decision-support tools while maintaining governance, cybersecurity and interoperability across departments.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Operational twins require continuous asset connectivity, quality data, common standards and secure interfaces.

Original announcement: https://www.dm.gov.ae/international-digital-twin-consortium-joined/

SAUDI ARABIA · RIYADH | 05 NOV 2026 | AWARD

Riyadh's Tawazoun programme earns global smart-city recognition



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

Riyadh's Tawazoun Real Estate Balance Programme received the Infrastructure & Building Award at the World Smart City Awards, held during Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona. The recognition relates to the programme's approach to land supply and housing affordability. It is an urban-development and policy achievement—not an award for fiber installation. For the smart-city community, the broader lesson is that successful city transformation combines planning, data and measurable public value with supporting infrastructure.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Digital infrastructure strengthens coordinated city delivery, but outcomes should be described accurately.

Original announcement: https://www.rcrc.gov.sa/en/tawazoun-program-smart-city-expo-2026-award-en/

QATAR · DOHA | 15 SEP 2026 | PHASE ONE ROLLOUT

Doha introduces an AI concierge into the public realm



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

Msheireb Properties announced the first phase of Rashid, an AI-powered digital visitor companion deployed through 15 interactive kiosks across Msheireb Downtown Doha. The application brings digital assistance into the everyday public realm, helping visitors discover services and navigate the district. The initiative is a practical example of connected city experience: an application that residents and visitors can interact with directly, supported by the less-visible infrastructure of broadband backhaul, platform hosting, support and operations.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Public-facing digital services need dependable connectivity as well as accessible, well-managed user experiences.

Original announcement: https://www.msheirebproperties.com/news/msheireb-properties-announces-rashid-its-smart-experience-companion-in-msheireb-downtown-doha/

SPAIN · BARCELONA | 05 NOV 2026 | EVENT COMPLETED

Smart City Expo emphasizes solutions with measurable urban impact



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

The 15th Smart City Expo World Congress concluded in Barcelona on 5 November 2026, drawing 29,721 attendees from 140 countries and 1,276 exhibitors. Its agenda placed practical outcomes at the centre of urban technology, with discussions encompassing housing, climate resilience, urban mobility, AI and scalable digital infrastructure. The event reinforced a shift away from disconnected pilots toward programmes that can be governed, operated and assessed across complex urban environments.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Interoperability, resilient communications and accountable operating models turn technology into city value.

Original announcement: https://www.smartcityexpo.com/press_release/smartcityexpo_s078/smart-city-expo-closes-its-15th-edition-showing-the-real-impact-of-urban-solutions/

MIDDLE EAST DISPATCH

UAE · ABU DHABI | 01 OCT 2026 | PARTNERSHIP

Siemens and Abu Dhabi collaborate on AI-enabled city infrastructure

Abu Dhabi's Department of Municipalities and Transport entered a strategic partnership with Siemens covering municipal data analytics, utility systems and intelligent mobility. The parties also intend to explore AI-enabled stormwater and flood prediction. The agreement signals growing attention to connecting asset management, predictive analytics and urban resilience; specific outcomes will depend on subsequent implementation.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION The value lies in linking OT data, municipal platforms and operational decisions.

Original announcement: https://www.mediaoffice.abudhabi/en/infrastructure/department-of-municipalities-and-transport-partners-with-siemens-to-advance-digital-urban-infrastructure-and-advanced-transit-networks/

OMAN | 13 OCT 2026 | IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

Oman advances unified digital municipal services

Muscat Municipality signed an agreement for a Unified Municipal System intended to integrate digital services and automate municipal processes across governorates. The initiative illustrates a shift toward shared workflows and interoperable public-service platforms, where the complexity is often as much institutional as technical.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION National municipal platforms benefit from common data governance and robust connectivity.

Original announcement: https://gom.gov.om/en/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?id=3505

LEBANON | 10 OCT 2026 | REGULATORY CONSULTATION

Lebanon reviews FTTH policy and deployment guidance

Lebanon's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority reported on a stakeholder workshop held on 1 October addressing FTTH access licensing, optical-fiber deployment guidelines and spectrum refarming. Regulatory clarity, rights of way and infrastructure-sharing arrangements can have a decisive effect on fixed network investment and the economics of future smart-city connectivity.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Clear, practicable rules can lower deployment friction and encourage open infrastructure investment.

Original announcement: https://www.tra.gov.lb/NewsDetails.aspx?pageid=3919

NORTH AFRICA DISPATCH

EGYPT | 08 SEP 2026 | ANNOUNCED PARTNERSHIPS

Egypt expands the regional conversation on sovereign AI compute



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

Egypt highlighted partnerships involving Vodafone Business, Elsewedy Electric and Cassava Technologies in support of data-centre and sovereign AI infrastructure. The project announcements reference an initial 20 MW facility and possible growth to 200 MW over time. The figures describe planned capacity, not a completed operational campus. Such developments can support the regional compute ecosystem that future data-intensive smart-city services will increasingly depend on.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Compute capacity requires equally robust power, cooling, carrier diversity and terrestrial fiber.

Original announcement: https://sis.gov.eg/en/media-center/news/communications-minister-witnesses-signing-of-egypt-s-largest-data-center-sovereign-ai-center/

MOROCCO | 27–29 OCT 2026 | EVENT COMPLETED

Laâyoune convenes the African Smart Cities & Innovation Congress

Laâyoune hosted the African Smart Cities & Innovation Congress in late October, featuring discussion of urban governance, AI, IoT, digital twins and sustainable development. The event reflected a growing African smart-city innovation network and renewed the conversation about locally adaptable implementation approaches.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Replicable city standards and practical procurement models are as important as innovation showcases.

Original announcement: https://www.ascic.org/

TUNISIA | 15 OCT 2026 | ANNOUNCED PLATFORM

Tunisia prepares an AI-supported Sustainable Development dashboard

The National Engineering School of Manouba announced preparations for SmartSDG Tunisia, a platform that would combine AI, satellite imagery and Earth observation to support development-indicator monitoring. The initial dashboard was planned for late November, so the October news concerns preparation rather than a verified completed national deployment.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Data provenance, transparency and institutional ownership are vital for trustworthy territorial dashboards.

Original announcement: https://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Economy/20692988-manouba-school-of

SOUTHERN EUROPE DISPATCH

PORTUGAL · COIMBRA | 21 OCT 2026 | IN DEVELOPMENT

Coimbra links 19 municipalities through a smart urban platform

Kyndryl and the Coimbra intermunicipal community announced the development of a shared urban management platform for 19 municipalities. The scheme includes approximately 2,000 connected devices, LoRaWAN data, water metering and waste-management use cases. It is a useful example of a regional operating model in which connectivity and data services are coordinated across municipal boundaries.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Shared access, aggregation and interoperable data practices make multi-city platforms viable.

Original announcement: https://www.kyndryl.com/br/pt/about-us/news/2026/10/cim-rc-gestao-urbana-inteligente-coimbra

ITALY | 23 SEP 2026 | ROLLOUT IN PROGRESS

Italy's Backbone 2.0 pushes national optical capacity forward



Conceptual CGI: context illustration, not a documentary project photograph.

Open Fiber reported that its Backbone 2.0 programme had passed the 2,000-km mark in newly laid optical cable. Its plan envisages more than 3,200 km by the first half of 2027, building long-distance capacity and improved route diversity between Italian cities. For urban ecosystems, national backbones are a crucial companion to metro fiber, access networks and carrier interconnection.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Route diversity and national backbone investment increase the resilience of connected-city ecosystems.

Original announcement: https://openfiber.it/media/comunicati-stampa/piano-backbone-fibra-rete/

GREECE · CHALANDRI | 23 OCT 2026 | PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Chalandri adds connected services to public spaces

Chalandri, in greater Athens, presented new connected public-space infrastructure including information kiosks, digital screens and public Wi-Fi points. Additional elements address smart pedestrian crossings and street-light control. The example demonstrates the visibility of smart-city transformation at street level—and the need for long-term operational ownership.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Connected public spaces combine access, edge devices, asset maintenance and security.

Original announcement: https://www.chalandri.gr/deltia_typou/123460/

ITALY + GREECE | 12 OCT 2026 | PILOTS IN PREPARATION

Taranto and Patras advance digital-twin scenarios for ports

Partners in the Interreg BE:TWIN initiative advanced digital-twin scenarios for the ports of Taranto and Patras. The work focuses on integrating operational information and simulation capabilities to support port planning and decision-making. The initiative is at scenario and pilot-preparation stage rather than a fully deployed twin operating across both ports.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Ports illustrate how operational digital twins depend on reliable connections between equipment, systems and stakeholders.

Original announcement: https://www.greece-italy.eu/digital-twin-scenarios-for-the-ports-of-taranto-and-patras-partners-meeting-in-bari/

SPAIN · MADRID | 03 NOV 2026 | INITIATIVES SHOWCASED

Madrid presents more than 100 smart-city initiatives

Madrid showcased over 100 urban technology initiatives during Smart City Expo, demonstrating a broad municipal programme spanning AI, housing, mobility, city services and geospatial technologies. The announcement provides a city-scale view of how public authorities can organize a diverse portfolio of digital transformation projects.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Portfolio governance and repeatable integration standards prevent fragmentation across initiatives.

Original announcement: https://www.madrid.es/portales/munimadrid/es/Inicio/Actualidad/Noticias/Madrid-reune-mas-de-100-iniciativas-tecnologicas-en-el-congreso-Smart-City-Expo-World-2026/?vgnextchannel=a12149fa40ec9410VgnVCM100000171f5a0aRCRD&vgnextfmt=default&vgnextoid=f04abb49aa0a1a10VgnVCM1000000891ecb1aRCRD

EUROPEAN UNION | 29 OCT 2026 | COOPERATION

CiTiVERSE promotes interoperable local digital twins

The European Commission publicized the participation of the Local Digital Twins CiTiVERSE European Digital Infrastructure Consortium at Smart City Expo 2026. The initiative seeks interoperable, human-centred applications that bring AI, digital twins and immersive technologies into municipal practice.

FIBER CONNECTIVITY IMPLICATION Interoperability and governance help digital-twin investments scale beyond a single platform or vendor.

Original announcement: https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/events/local-digital-twins-citiverse-edic-joins-smart-city-expo-world-congress-2026

THE COMMITTEE VIEW

Five priorities for fiber-enabled smart cities

01 FIBER EXPANSION

Scale access and backbone capacity.

Committee implication: Plan fiber routes and capacity early in master planning; protect diversity and civil-work access.

02 AI ENTERS SERVICES

Move from compute investment to usable public value.

Committee implication: Define data ownership, service levels, cybersecurity and human oversight before rollout.

03 DIGITAL TWINS MATURE

Make data models interoperable rather than vendor-isolated.

Committee implication: Define reference architecture, information standards, interfaces and update responsibilities.

04 MOBILITY IS CONVERGING

Integrate vehicles, payment, control centres and passenger channels.

Committee implication: Engineer resilient field backhaul, controls and monitoring for end-to-end availability.

05 REGIONAL SCALE MATTERS

Share platforms across municipalities and institutions.

Committee implication: Measure public-service outcomes, lifecycle cost, uptime and repeatability.