Private Sector Associates of
The United States Conference of Mayors

United States Conference of Mayors
Business Council 2026 Best Practices Report

Mayors and Businesses Driving Economic Growth

2026

THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

David Holt
Mayor of Oklahoma City
President

Todd Gloria
Mayor of San Diego
Vice President

Leirion Gaylor Baird
Mayor of Lincoln
Second Vice President

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director

The United States Conference of Mayors is the official non-partisan organization of cities with each city represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor.

Foreword

The United States Conference of Mayors is proud of the members of the Mayors Business Council and the work they have accomplished with cities to improve the quality of life in America's cities. Working together, our cities have become more livable and more competitive, and the economy is growing stronger every day.

The *United States Conference of Mayors Business Council Best Practice Report: Mayors and Businesses Driving Economic Growth* showcases outstanding and innovative public/private partnerships submitted by the Mayors Business Council to inspire other cities and companies to work together in addressing the economic challenges facing cities and our nation.

Mayors and business leaders agree that creative public/private partnerships are a major force in shaping cities of the 21st century and experience has shown when businesses and local governments work together, our cities benefit and our nation is stronger.

The Mayors Business Council has been an integral part of the structure and activities of The United States Conference of Mayors for almost 30 years. Central to the mission of our Business Council is the goal of both improving the business environment in cities and sharing the successful public/private partnerships that take many forms with benefits ranging from economic development and environmental improvements to better schools, a more educated workforce, and connected cities through technology.

The Conference looks forward to strengthening its relationship with the business community by nurturing and celebrating the new and creative partnerships between cities and businesses.

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
The United States Conference of Mayors

Contents

AECOM: Building Green Futures: A Strategy for Advancing Philadelphia's Clean Energy Workforce

Project Description: AECOM partnered with the City of Philadelphia's Office of Sustainability (OOS) and the City College for Municipal Employment & Workforce Programming (CCME/WP) to develop the City's first Clean Energy Workforce Strategy, focused on scaling the workforce needed to support building decarbonization and energy efficiency upgrades.

Recognizing that buildings are the largest source of emissions in Philadelphia, the strategy aligns workforce development with climate, housing, and economic mobility goals. The effort combined quantitative workforce analysis, ecosystem mapping, and extensive stakeholder engagement (including a Technical Advisory Group whose guidance on strategy development built on insights gathered through focus groups and interviews with employers, training providers, and community organizations).

The resulting strategy identifies priority occupations and outlines coordinated actions across career entry, training pathways, advancement, and entrepreneurship. It provides a clear, data-driven framework for building a skilled, inclusive clean energy workforce.

Challenge: Philadelphia faces a critical need to scale its workforce to meet energy efficiency goals while improving housing quality and energy affordability. The City's aging building stock requires significant upgrades, yet the workforce needed to deliver these improvements remains insufficient.

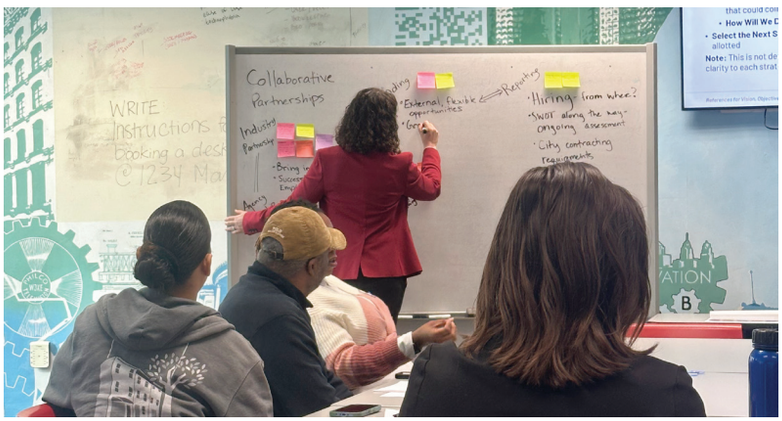
Key challenges include workforce supply gaps in critical trades, limited alignment between training programs and employer demand, and an aging workforce nearing retirement. The ecosystem is fragmented, with multiple actors operating independently and limited coordination across sectors.

Workforce availability is further constrained by barriers to entry, such as lack of awareness of clean energy careers, unclear career pathways, and limited access to supportive services. Without targeted action, these gaps threaten the City's ability to meet climate goals and expand access to quality jobs.

Impact: The Clean Energy Workforce Strategy provides Philadelphia with a clear and actionable roadmap to align workforce development with climate priorities. It establishes priority occupations, defines workforce needs, and identifies targeted actions to close gaps in supply, training, and access in the near term (1-3 years).

The strategy strengthens coordination across employers, training providers, and public agencies, creating a shared framework for implementation. It positions the City to accelerate building decarbonization while expanding access to quality career opportunities.

Beyond workforce outcomes, the strategy advances broader City goals to reduce emissions, improve housing conditions, lower energy burden, and support the City's economic growth. The engagement process itself helped build stronger partnerships, enabling coordinated and effective implementation efforts.



Strategy Development Workshop led by AECOM and the City of Philadelphia

How-to: AECOM supported the development of this strategy through a structured, collaborative process with OOS and CCME/WP:

- Conducted a workforce analysis to understand job demand, workforce gaps, and demographic trends
- Mapped the workforce ecosystem to identify key actors and opportunities for alignment
- Engaged stakeholders through focus groups and interviews, and reinforced findings through an advisory group
- Defined a clear vision and prioritized objectives that connected high-impact occupations to climate goals and career opportunities
- Developed targeted strategies across career entry, training, advancement, and entrepreneurship
- Established key recommendations and implementation actions tied to defined roles and available funding

This approach resulted in a strategy that is both data-driven and grounded in real-world workforce needs.

General Tips: A strong analytical foundation is critical, and cities should begin with a clear understanding of workforce needs, priority occupations, and system gaps before developing strategies. Establishing broad-based stakeholder buy-in throughout the process strengthens long-term success.

Equally important is early alignment on roles and implementation pathways. Defining responsible stakeholders, sequencing actions, and identifying potential funding sources during strategy development accelerates the transition from planning to execution.

Budget: $250,000

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Foundations, General Purpose City Funds

Additional Investment: The Office of Sustainability has hired a Clean Energy Workforce Strategist. In addition, in partnership with PowerCorpsPHL, the City of Philadelphia is designing and launching a Home Repair Green Skilled Trades Academy, in alignment with the Mayor's Housing Opportunities Made Easy (H.O.M.E.) initiative. The Academy will train, support, and place Philadelphia residents into high-demand careers with residential contractor skilled trades (electricians, carpenters, HVAC, general contractors, roofers, plumbers, weatherization, etc.). Overall, the goals of the Academy are to strengthen Philadelphia's skilled trades workforce, home repair ecosystem, and the local contractor community.

Tags: Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Nidhi Krishen
Office of Sustainability, Citywide Energy Services, Program Director
nidhi.krishen@phila.gov

Business Council Contact:
Alison Nemirow
AVP, Principal, AECOM Advisory
alison.nemirow@aecom.com

American Beverage Association: Improving Recycling in Providence, RI

Project Description: The city of Providence, RI and Mayor Brett Smiley partnered with the American Beverage Association, the Rhode Island Beverage Association, Closed Loop Partners, The Recycling Partnership and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program to deliver new, standardized trash and recycling carts to residents. These replaced aging, inconsistent containers and were reinforced with education and enforcement strategies to help residents recycle better and more. Through the delivery of approximately 55,000 recycling carts, the city aimed to la y the foundation for a stronger, more effective recycling system citywide.

Standardizing carts throughout the city reduces residents' misuse and confusion over where to dispose of their items. Education is a crucial element of this plan, to support the successful integration of the carts. The campaign should inform residents of both the changes and what goes in their bin in the city.

Challenge: The city's goal was to improve their 2.4 percent recycling rate, the lowest in Rhode Island. Many residents were using their recycling cart as another trash cart. Providence also had a 47 percent contamination rate in their recycling stream, equating to the city losing 288 pounds of valuable, recyclable material to the landfill per household. With the city's landfill filling up quickly, the city had to replace infrastructure and instill behavioral change to improve their recycling rate.

This project gave residents of every single-family household in Providence standardized recycling and trash carts and education on what to recycle and how to recycle properly. With upgraded tools and education, residents can feel confident in what they need to do and how to do it when it comes to recycling. This path forward is a proven method to reducing contamination in the local recycling stream.

Impact: This project is expected to keep 2.6 million pounds of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic and 880,000 pounds of aluminum from ending up in the environment or the local landfill. Instead, this material has a better chance of being recycled and remade into something new.

ABA's Jessica Beal (left) and Josh Whitehead (right) pose with the new recycling bins alongside Rhode Island Beverage Association's Peg Sweeney (center left) and Providence Mayor Brett Smiley

How-to: America's beverage companies set up a long term partnership with Closed Loop Partners and The Recycling Partnership through our Every Bottle Back® initiative, committing $100 million dollars to improve recycling infrastructure in the United States. In Providence, both Closed Loop Partners and The Recycling Partnership engaged with city staff to discuss needs for their recycling program and how to solve them. Upon agreement, they deployed our funds to go towards part of the project.

General Tips: To ensure goals are being met when it comes to improving recycling, it's important to always pair recycling efforts with an education campaign. Residents are more willing to adopt the recycling strategy when they have the necessary information, not just the tools.

Budget: In total, Providence leveraged $7.4 million to improve their recycling and trash tools and services for their residents. Out of those funds, American Beverage invested $2.6 million.

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Federal Grants

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Environment Impact

All partners and funders pose with the new recycling bins at a press conference in Providence, RI.

City Contact:
Kevin Proft
Deputy Director of Sustainability
kproft@providenceri.gov

Business Council Contact:
Bill McManus
Vice President, External Affairs
bmcmanus@americanbeverage.org

Jessica Beal, Director, Sustainability
jbeal@americanbeverage.org

American Forests: Trees as Infrastructure: Growing Health, Resilience, and Economic Opportunity

Project Description: Trees are not amenities—they are cost-effective infrastructure that help cities reduce heat, manage stormwater, and improve public health.

American Forests exists to advance a future in which forests—across every landscape and community—are healthy, resilient, and able to sustain life. We work with cities, states, and community-based organizations to expand tree canopy where it is needed most.

Through our urban forestry work, we are in over 250 communities, bringing our Tree Equity data, planning and policy, partnership and project implementation resources and capacity.

Not simply a tree-planting program, our Tree Equity initiative works across three interlocking areas of practice to create greener, healthier U.S. cities through trees: building the knowledge and tools cities need to act, investing directly in communities and programs to catalyze local urban greening, and shaping the policies and systems that determine where trees get planted and who benefits.

Challenge: Trees are critical infrastructure, but access is unequal, often closely tracking race and income. Our Tree Equity Score tool maps trees alongside heat, income, race, and health vulnerability. With this data and federal funding secured by American Forests, cities like Spokane, WA are taking action.

Tree canopy cover is vital for environmental cooling, air quality, energy use, and public health. With each tree planted, we're increasing the canopy cover for those most in need."

Impact: "Through our Urban Forestry Master Plan and our Climate Protection and Resilience Plan, Kansas City has put forward an ambitious vision for growing our urban canopy, expanding access to sustainable food, and building a more climate resilient city", said Mayor Quinton Lucas. "In partnership with Kansas City Community Gardens, American Forests helped raise over $225,000 to make healthy, homegrown foods more accessible for low-income residents, and successfully advocated for legislation that helped kickstart Kansas City's Canopy Cover KC initiative, through which we have planted over 13,000 trees in recent years."

Kansas City, MO Mayor Quinton Lucas

How-to: As the impacts of extreme weather events take hold of U.S. cities, trees are lifesaving infrastructure, yet not every community has equal access to trees.

Across America, the presence of trees is not random. It follows the lines of race and income drawn by decades of disinvestment and the systematic neglect of communities of color. American Forests calls this the Tree Equity gap, and we work with cities to close it.

American Forests works with mayors to develop a data-driven Tree Equity goal tailored to their community. We then help amplify that commitment through press releases, media engagement, and social media. At the same time, we partner closely with municipal program managers to move from planning into implementation and action.

The process starts with a free initial consultation with a mayor or their staff to assess their urban forestry programs and develop a plan to initiate or strengthen their approach to advancing progress. We provide numerous free tools - including American Forests' Tree Equity Score to prioritize, plan, and communicate impact.

Our team of certified arborists, data scientists, and community specialists then work alongside municipalities to develop and deliver customized offerings to overcome your barriers to achieving Tree Equity.

Find your Tree Equity Score at www.TreeEquityScore.org.

General Tips: Project budget and funding sources vary based on project scope. In Kansas City, MO project is federally funded. Many cities utilize general funds, tree trusts, or mitigation funds to support their urban forestry programs.

Regardless of project size - the industry standard return on investment (ROI) of investing in healthy urban trees is 225%. Meaning, for every $1 invested in planting and maintaining urban trees, there are $2.25 in benefits. Although the upfront costs of planting and maintaining trees is high, the long-term benefits and services provided by trees are far worth the initial investment.

Budget: Project costs varies city by city, depending on a variety of factors including project scope, scale, and area of focus.

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Foundations, Federal Grants, State Grants, General Purpose City Funds, Other:

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Environment Impact, Jobs Created

City Contact:
Kansas City, MO: Phinney Sachs
Special Advisor, Office of Mayor Quinton Lucas
phinney.sachs@kcmo.org

Business Council Contact:
Tanner Haid
Senior Director, Urban Forestry Field Delivery
thaid@americanforests.org
(202) 737-1944 ext. 9

Amrize: East Side Coastal Resiliency Project (ESCR): Climate-Resilient Flood Protection for Lower Manhattan

Project Description: Amrize partnered with the City of New York and IPC Resiliency Partners on the East Side Coastal Resiliency Project (ESCR), a $1.45 billion climate resiliency initiative along Manhattan's eastern waterfront. Part of the broader "BIG U" vision conceived after Superstorm Sandy, the project delivers integrated flood protection for over 110,000 New Yorkers — including 28,000 residents in NYCHA public housing — while creating new accessible green spaces, parks, and pathways along the shoreline. Amrize supplied two innovative concrete solutions for the project: MAXtect™ Structural Engineered Solutions, a high-performance concrete chosen for its superior strength, durability, and low permeability for use in flood-protection walls; and OneCem®, an Amrize low-carbon cement blend used across structural and landscape elements. To date, 40,000 tons of OneCem® and 5,000 tons of slag have been used in the ESCR section. The project received the Envision Gold Award for sustainability from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure in August 2022, and is now recognized as a replicable blueprint for waterfront resilience in coastal U.S. cities.

Challenge: New York City's eastern waterfront remained acutely vulnerable to coastal flooding after Superstorm Sandy devastated the area in 2012, causing widespread power outages and severe damage to residential and public infrastructure. Low-lying neighborhoods along the East Side — home to tens of thousands of residents, including many in public housing — faced ongoing risk from tidal surge, storm events, and accelerating sea-level rise. The city needed a solution that would not only provide durable, long-term flood protection but also restore and enhance public waterfront spaces that had been underinvested for decades. Any approach also had to meet the highest sustainability standards and withstand the demanding environmental conditions of an urban coastal estuary — freeze-thaw cycles, chemical exposure, and abrasion — without requiring frequent maintenance or replacement.

Impact: The ESCR project delivers direct protection from coastal flooding for more than 110,000 New Yorkers, with particular benefit for the 28,000 residents of NYCHA public housing in the project area — communities that were disproportionately impacted by Superstorm Sandy. Flood walls constructed with Amrize's MAXtect™ high-performance concrete shield the neighborhood from the Hudson River and East River tidal estuary, while OneCem® concrete blends create accessible parks and pathways along the waterfront. The project received the Envision Gold Award for sustainability from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure in August 2022, evaluated across Quality of Life, Leadership, Resource Allocation, Natural World, and Climate and Resilience. Beyond New York City, the collaboration between Amrize and IPC Resiliency Partners has established ESCR as a national model — a replicable blueprint for other coastal U.S. cities seeking to combine infrastructure resilience with community-centered public space improvements.

East Side Coastal Resiliency Project — flood protection walls constructed with Amrize MAXtect™ high-performance concrete shield more than 110,000 residents from tidal surge along the (NYC) East River waterfront. Designed by BIG.

East Side Coastal Resiliency Project — waterfront park and pathway network, created using Amrize OneCem® low-carbon concrete — combining climate resilience with accessible community green space in Lower Manhattan. Designed by BIG.

How-to:

1. Engage early with city agencies and community stakeholders. Early community engagement was essential to align design with neighborhood needs.
2. Design for dual purpose. Partnering with an architecture firm, the project team designed flood barriers that double as public amenities ensuring that protection infrastructure also improves daily quality of life.
3. Select materials with long-term performance in mind. Amrize conducted rigorous mix design optimization to meet the environmental demands of a coastal estuary site.
4. Pursue recognized sustainability certifications. The team applied the Envision framework from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure throughout design and construction, ultimately achieving Gold certification.
5. Document the model for replication. Amrize positioned ESCR as a transferable model for waterfront cities across the U.S., sharing technical learnings to support similar projects in other climate-vulnerable communities.

General Tips: Selecting private sector partners with strong R&D capacity is as important as the initial design. Pursuing formal sustainability certifications in the process adds credibility, attracts additional investment, and creates a benchmark that strengthens the case for replication in other cities. Finally, framing flood infrastructure as social infrastructure builds broader political and community support, making it easier to sustain funding across budget cycles.

Budget: $1.45 billion (total project cost)

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Federal Grants

Additional Investment: The project received the Envision Gold Award from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure in August 2022, recognizing sustainability performance across five categories. Amrize's proprietary materials innovations (MAXtect™ and OneCem®) represent significant private R&D investment incorporated into the project.

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Increased Tourism, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Paul A. Ochoa
(718) 391-1000

Business Council Contact:
Nollaig Forrest
nollaig.forrest@amrize.com

AT&T Inc.: The Louisville Model: A Public-Private Task Force That Drove Copper Theft to Zero

Project Description: Copper theft is a public safety emergency. In Louisville, AT&T recorded 30 copper theft incidents in January 2025 alone.

Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg established a standing, multi-agency coalition of city government, law enforcement, prosecutors, regulators, utilities, and private sector partners. AT&T elevated the issue to a statewide policy priority, while AT&T's External & Legislative Affairs, Network, and Global Security teams provided policy leadership, investigative support, and public-safety impact framing.

The Task Force pursued a three-pronged strategy: local ordinances, tighter enforcement, and a multi-channel public awareness campaign. By February 2026, Louisville reported zero AT&T copper thefts, demonstrating how a city-business partnership can deliver rapid, replicable results.

Challenge: Kentucky experienced more than 500 copper theft incidents in 2024. The problem migrated from eastern Kentucky in 2023 to Louisville Metro in 2024. Copper and fiber lines used in telecommunications, streetlights, and other utilities were increasingly targeted by thieves. These crimes disrupted service, increased repair costs, and created dangerous vulnerabilities, particularly when fiber lines carrying emergency and healthcare communications were damaged alongside copper wiring.

Before the Task Force, penalties varied, recyclers faced limited reporting requirements, and copper theft was often treated as a routine property offense.

It was determined that progress required a coordinated response addressing the entire theft lifecycle supported by clear rules, consistent enforcement, and visible leadership from both city government and private operators.

Impact: The Louisville Model delivered measurable, rapid results:

- From January 2025 to January 2026, theft impacting AT&T's Louisville network dropped 90%. Zero incidents were reported in February, March and April 2026.
- Seven arrests in the major August 2025 enforcement operation; 12 total ABC arrests from 2025 through March 2026.
- Nine felony indictments by December 15, 2025.
- Industry impact: Charter/Spectrum reported a nearly 80% reduction in fiber line cuts from 2024 to 2025.

The initiative protected critical services such as 911 call centers, hospitals, and schools, and restored public confidence. The Task Force's success also prompted AT&T and partners to pursue statewide replication of the Louisville ordinance model through the 2026 Kentucky General Assembly.

How-to:

- Frame copper theft as a public-safety issue.
- Establish a mayor-led task force.
- Strengthen local ordinances.
- City agencies coordinated investigations and prosecutions, increasing meaningful consequences for offenders.
- Launch a campaign to educate residents, deter theft, and encourage tip reporting through Crime Stoppers.
- Track incident data and publicly reporting reductions reinforced accountability and helped position Louisville as a model for other cities.

General Tips:

- Unite the industry. A unified industry voice is far more persuasive to legislators and prosecutors than a single company's complaint.
- The recycler ordinance can be complex. In Louisville, large recyclers mobilized trade associations and experienced lobbyists. Build coalitions early and allow ample time.
- Rural enforcement is a distinct challenge. Small counties may lack the resources or appetite to enforce new penalties. Supplement legislation with direct education and state-level coordination for rural agencies.
- Keep technology deployments quiet. Asset trackers and forensic marking systems are powerful but public disclosure tips off offenders. Coordinate messaging with law enforcement first.
- Celebrate zero. When theft drops to zero, announce it loudly. It reinforces deterrence, sustains elected officials' support, and signals to would-be offenders that the city is watching.

Funding Sources: Private Funding, General Purpose City Funds, Other:

Additional Investment: AT&T Global Security contributed investigative resources, technology pilots (asset trackers, Data Dot forensic marking), and impact statement development at no cost to the city. AT&T External & Legislative Affairs sustained ongoing stakeholder engagement, newsletter communications, and legislative coordination as an in-kind contribution. Charter/Spectrum provided co-funded airtime and statewide legislative collaboration.

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Impact on City Economy, Business Benefits

Louisville bus stop

Louisville Crime Stoppers billboard

City Contact:
Deputy Mayor Nicole George
Louisville Metro Government
Nicole.george@louisvilleky.gov

Business Council Contact:
Carlos E. Sanchez
President, AT&T Kentucky
cs6325@att.com

AtkinsRéalis: Sound Transit's Largest Design Build Transit Project

Project Description: The Federal Way Link Extension(FWLE), Sound Transit's largest design-build project to date, is a 7.8 mile, $1.6B light rail expansion project in King County, Washington. The expansion connects Seattle with the cities of SeaTac, Des Moines, Kent and Federal Way. The line transports passengers from Federal Way to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in 16 minutes and Kent Des Moines Station to downtown Seattle in 42 minutes. AtkinsRéalis served as Sound Transit's oversight and project management partner for the project that added three new stations(Kent-Des Moines, Star Lake, and Federal Way Downtown) 3,200 new parking spaces, two parking garages, one parking garage extension, pedestrian pathways and connections that support easy transfers to regional bus services to improve mobility across South King County and support future growth throughout the area. Since teaming together in 2018, more than 100 AtkinsRéalis professionals delivered resident engineering, construction oversight, design reviews, project controls and scheduling, change management and technical support, quality oversight, and systems assurance to the project.

Challenge: AtkinsRéalis and Sound Transit partnered on the project as means to relieve congestion on Interstate 5, provide equitable and reliable transportation services for the growing southern portion of King County, reduce carbon emissions and improve access for urban mobility. The FWLE modernized King County's rail and transit system and wrote the blueprint for urban planning during the Infrastructure Decade. The FWLE incorporated smart design, real-time data and seamless integration for multi-modal transportation.

Navigating through a global pandemic, a concrete driver strike and natural disasters; further challenges arose in the form of inflationary prices on materials, managing supply chain elements, maintaining workforce in a competitive market and even on-the-ground pivots. By implementing disciplined project management and people-centered collaboration, AtkinsRéalis and Sound Transit were able to standardize processes and keep the train on track.

Impact: The FWLE "connected the spine of our light rail system", Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland and allows King County residents "more freedom to get around without spending so much time stuck in traffic," said U.S. Senator Patty Murray. The 7.8 mile high-capacity light rail expansion provides service every eight minutes and links communities to reliable transportation options with connections to jobs, schools, healthcare, shopping and events across the region and key urban hubs. The FWLE is more than just a means for travel, it's a catalyst for community development. The FWLE opened to the public on December 6, 2025, and advanced equitable access for an estimated 29,000-34,000 daily passengers. This project demonstrates a commitment to partnership by working side by side with Sound Transit to ensure transparency, accountability, and informed decision making; a focus on resilience by using data, engineering expertise, and processes to navigate unforeseen technical challenges without compromising safety, quality, or schedule; and a dedication to community benefit, ensuring that infrastructure solutions are accessible, reliable, and built to serve people for decades to come.

The new Federal Way Link Extension in action!

Ribbon cutting ceremony of the Federal Way Link Extension on December 6, 2025

How-to: By establishing a one team approach where "the lines between the companies were blurred" AtkinsRéalis was able to integrate oversight of their teams to support procurement and prepare for a single design-build contract covering design and construction. When referring to AtkinsRéalis' joint venture with Mott MacDonald, the executive project director stated "On the Federal Way Link Extension, AtkinsRéalis and Mott MacDonald exemplified what a true joint venture should, working seamlessly together that the distinction between firms completely disappeared."

By co-locating and integrating functions the resident engineering, project management, technical support and independent quality verification (QV) were able to communicate transparently and fast-track submittals, RFI reviews and decision-making while maintaining strong governance. Additionally, by co-locating we were able to manage risk proactively. For example, the AtkinsRéalis team created the core tenant of the design-build model of trust and collaboration. When co-located the teams freely discussed commercial items and avoided prolonged letter writing campaigns (saving many hours and allowing the teams to focus on the core issues affecting the construction schedule). Further, following the discovery of unstable soils and the I-5 embankment slide, utilizing the "design-build mental shift," the team recognized that a redesign was the correct move for the project, and began to progress the design prior to documenting the potential change item was even documented.

As Sound Transit's largest design build project to date, AtkinsRéalis established a robust lessons-learned program for the project that encouraged collaborative behaviors and data driven oversight practices that scale to future Link extensions.

General Tips: The Federal Way Link Extension achieved the following awards:

- "2026 Innovative Transportation Solution Award" by the Puget Sound Chapter of the WTS (Women in Transportation Seminar) WTS
- 2026 John L. Martin Partnered Project of the Year Award - International Partnering Institute (IPI)
- 2026 Marvin M. Black Excellence in Partnering and Collaboration Award- Association of General Contractors (AGC)

Budget: $1.6 billion

Funding Sources: Federal Grants

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Increased Tourism, Business Benefits

Contact:
Linneth Riley-Hall
Executive Project Director
Linneth.riley-hall@soundtransit.org

Business Council Contact:
Kenneth Regan
Rail and Transit Lead – Pacific Northwest
Kenneth.Regan@atkinsrealis.com
(951) 317-4345

Bentley Systems: Reconnecting Philadelphia to Its Waterfront: The I-95 Penn's Landing CAP Project (I-95 CAP)

Project Description: Interstate 95 (I-95) is a critical transportation artery through central Philadelphia but has long separated the historic city center from its waterfront. The I-95 CAP project aims to improve multimodal access and economic development by constructing an 11.5-acre elevated public park over I-95 and Columbus Boulevard. As part of the master plan for the Delaware River Waterfront, Pennoni, a Philadelphia-based engineering firm, led 21 subconsultants to convert 2011 planning concepts into a buildable project that re-establishes a meaningful connection between the city and river.

Pennoni used Bentley Systems software to design the park, creating a natural flow between the city and the river. The cap structure serves as the foundation for the new public park. Additionally, the project extends the South Street pedestrian bridge with an 80-foot-high asymmetrical tied arch structure to carry pedestrians and cyclists over I-95, creating a more welcoming gateway into Penn's Landing. This project aims to reconnect the urban core of the city with the riverfront through accessibility, community life, mobility, and economic development.

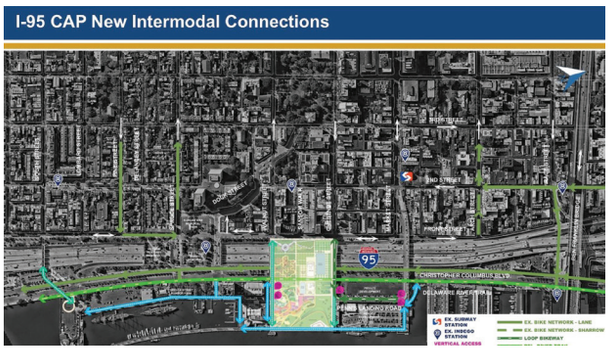
Challenge: From the beginning, the project faced multiple, complex challenges. The site itself posed significant geotechnical uncertainty. The portion of the park, referred to as Penn's Landing since its creation in the 1960s, was constructed through the placement of fill materials in the river, of which the condition was unknown and required a deep level of investigation to assess settlement risks, load behavior, and potential structural impact.

The new bridge that would span over I-95 was also a challenge. The geometry of the bridge was inherently irregular, as it was squeezed between the lowered interstate below and the new park built on top. One of the biggest obstacles was ensuring enough vertical clearance between the two levels.

Impact: The use of Bentley's integrated digital modeling software has been critical to the project's success. The software enabled Pennoni's team to design and analyze a highly complex structure within a tight schedule. The advanced digital modeling allowed for the irregular structure to become manageable and allowed the team to continuously adapt the bridge configuration as park features evolved without using labor-intensive manual recalculations.

Some significant measurable outcomes include:

- Drastic reduction in work and design hours: The team saved 45,000 work hours and achieved a 100% reduction in design hours needed to verify bridge clearances. There was a 50% reduction in modeling hours for civic and highway design.
- Positive environmental impact: The project will convert nearly 62% of the site's impervious surfaces to previous green space to create a more sustainable asset.
- Improved collaboration: The integrated models facilitated seamless collaboration among 21 firms, minimized design errors, and allowed for the creation of the new public space for the city.



New bridge and park over the I-95 improved multimodal access to the Delaware River waterfront.

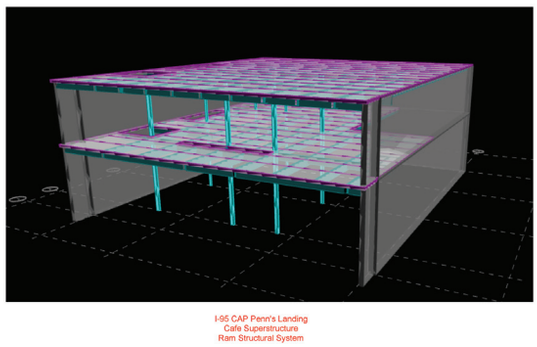
How-to:

Bentley Systems Software used in the I-95 CAP project:

- OpenBridge: Used to model the complex, irregular geometry of the main park bridge structure.
- OpenRoads: Utilized for modeling existing highway infrastructure to improve quantity estimates and reduce risk.
- PLAXIS: Employed for geotechnical analysis of settlement in poor soil conditions.
- STAAD.Pro/RAM: Used for structural analysis of various park and bridge elements.
- ProjectWise: Served as the collaboration and data management platform for the large, multidisciplinary team.

Budget: $575 million

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy



Bentley RAM software reduced design time by 100% for the café and transfer platforms.

City Contact:
Edward Edney, J.D.
Senior Director, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs,
Edward.Edney@phila.gov

Business Council Contact:
Katie Dailinger
Director, State and Local Government Relations
Katie.Dailinger@bentley.com

Best Friends Animal Society: 21st Century Animal Services: Becoming a No-Kill Community in Gillette, WY

Project Description: Gillette, WY partnered with Best Friends Animal Society to achieve no-kill by modernizing animal services. Between 2022 and 2025, Gillette increased its save rate from 86% to 95%, achieving and sustaining no-kill.

Gillette's Animal Control Division operates a city-owned shelter and enforces the city's animal control ordinances while balancing the health, safety, and welfare of residents and animals.

Best Friends partners with shelters nationwide to build data-driven, community-based programs that save lives, reduce costs, and improve community relationships.

In this scalable, strategic partnership with Gillette, Best Friends provided technical assistance, grant funding, and operational support to help the city transition from a traditional sheltering model to a modern system focused on lifesaving and prevention, implementing a community cat program, updating ordinances, and training staff.

Challenge: Prior to the partnership, Gillette faced operational and structural challenges common to many municipal shelters, including euthanizing healthy and treatable cats, experiencing gaps in community-based programming, and relying on traditional outdated sheltering approaches.

Without system changes, Gillette risked escalating intake, higher per-animal costs, and continued euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals. The data highlighted the need for focused strategies, data-driven decision-making, and expanding partnerships to reduce intake pressure and improve outcomes.

Jessica Gutman, Best Friends' Sr. Strategist said, "Gillette's work shows other cities that strong animal services are built through practical planning, local leadership, and community-based programs. Their efforts reduce shelter strain while improving outcomes for pets and residents."

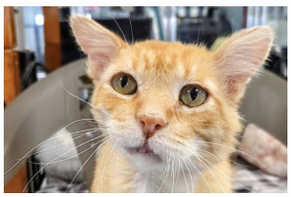
Impact: Between '22 and '25, Gillette increased its save rate from 86% to 95%. Intentional policy changes and program implementation through the strategic partnership with Best Friends yielded a 16% increase in cat lifesaving. These policy and program changes:

- Reduced euthanasia and improved animal welfare outcomes
- Stabilized shelter capacity and operational efficiency and
- Strengthened community trust in municipal services.

The shelter maintains a save rate above 95%, demonstrating the sustainability of the model and effectiveness of these strategies.

Brooke Worman, Animal Shelter Supervisor, said "Partnering with Best Friends has been a turning point for lifesaving in our organization. By connecting us with a broad network of rescues and other shelters, they've made it possible to place animals into homes faster than ever. Beyond networking, their expertise was vital in launching our Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return program, which has drastically reduced our cat euthanasia. For a municipal shelter, these partnerships are invaluable; they provide the resources and support we need to ensure our animals receive every opportunity for placement."

City of Gillette Animal Shelter



Spalding was saved thanks to the partnership between Gillette Animal Services and a local rescue

How-to: Cities can follow a structured, data-driven approach that might include:

- Establish a public-private partnership with a technical assistance provider experienced in municipal animal services
- Join the Best Friends Network Partner program which provides professional development resources, connections to peer and mentor shelters, and opportunities for grant funds
- Conduct and monitoring baseline data analysis
- Utilize free, automated data platforms for shelters to interact with their data, compare their data to similarly situated shelters, and formulate strategies for improved services.
- Expand transfer partnerships with regional shelters and rescues to increase live outcomes
- Engage the community through outreach, education, non-traditional partnerships, and volunteer programming

General Tips: Modern shelters become and remain no-kill when communities prioritize collaboration and:

- Treat animal services as a core public safety and community stability function
- Implement prevention-based strategies to reduce intake pressures
- Use data to drive decision-making
- Align policy, funding, and operations to support long-term sustainability
- Initiate pilot programs to assess impact and build stakeholder support
- Leverage partnerships to expand capacity without increasing municipal costs

Budget: $42,000+ investment by Best Friends Animal Society

Funding Sources: Private Funding, General Purpose City Funds, Other:

Additional Investment: Gillette also participated in Best Friends National Adoption Events and received adoption stipends in 2022 and 2023.

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Impact on City Economy

City Contact:
Brooke Worman
City of Gillette Animal Shelter Supervisor
brookeb@gillettewy.gov
(307) 685-5249

Business Council Contact:
Kelsey Gilmore-Futeral
kfuteral@bestfriends.org
(843) 323-7000

Black & Veatch: McCoys Creek Flood Mitigation

Project Description: In Jacksonville, Florida, the McCoys Creek project showcases a transformative approach to urban flood mitigation — replacing traditional gray infrastructure with nature-based, resilient design. Guided by Black & Veatch, the projected $163.8-million initiative is working to restore 2.8 miles of a heavily channelized drainage system into a functional floodplain, reintroducing native vegetation, wetlands and natural stream meanders, while rebuilding two bridges.

Instead of deepening or widening a conventional ditch, the project integrates civil, structural and ecological engineering to create a "living system" that manages stormwater dynamically. The result reduces flood risk while improving water quality, restoring habitat and creating accessible green space for residents.

McCoys Creek demonstrates how cities can align infrastructure investment with environmental restoration and community priorities, offering a replicable model for urban resilience that delivers flood control, sustainability and quality-of-life benefits in developed environments.

Challenge: For decades, McCoys Creek posed a chronic public safety and infrastructure challenge in Jacksonville's urban core. Aging, undersized drainage infrastructure — constrained by development, rail corridors and historical modifications — repeatedly failed during heavy rainfall, causing frequent and severe flooding. Homes, streets and public assets were routinely inundated, stranding motorists, requiring emergency rescues and disrupting daily life.

The creek itself had been transformed from a natural waterway into a straightened, concrete and steel lined ditch, with wetlands filled and portions buried. This degraded system not only lacked capacity but also contributed to poor water quality and long-term environmental risks, including legacy contamination from industrial fill materials.

Traditional solutions such as enlarging the drainage channel offered limited benefit, high cost and little community support. Jacksonville needed a remedy that could address persistent flooding while overcoming physical constraints, environmental degradation and public skepticism — all within a dense, historic urban setting.

Impact: The McCoys Creek restoration already is delivering measurable, visible results. Dozens of homes and more than 100 public assets have been removed from the FEMA 100 year floodplain, significantly reducing flood risk and associated damages. Nuisance flooding has been dramatically reduced, improving mobility and public safety in surrounding neighborhoods.

Equally important, the project has restored a functioning urban ecosystem. Native vegetation is thriving, aquatic habitats are reestablishing, and the creek now supports fish nurseries and improved water quality. The transformation from a degraded drainage ditch to a living waterway has reconnected residents to nature and revitalized the surrounding community.

The project also supports Jacksonville's broader Emerald Trail initiative, linking neighborhoods through greenways and public spaces. Together, these outcomes demonstrate how nature based solutions can deliver not only infrastructure performance but also environmental, social and economic value at scale.

How-to: McCoys Creek's success is rooted in a multidisciplinary, community-centered approach that can be replicated by other municipalities.

1. Engineers conducted analyses to assess system limitations, demonstrating that conventional solutions wouldn't sustainably address flooding, creating a technical foundation for alternative approaches.
2. Early and consistent public outreach was critical. Through partnerships with organizations such as Groundwork Jacksonville, project leaders gathered input on community priorities — cleaner water, safer neighborhoods and accessible green space — that built trust and strong local support.
3. Black & Veatch combined civil, structural and ecological expertise to design a restored floodplain system.
4. The project leveraged its multi-benefit design to secure federal and state funding, demonstrating that nature-based solutions can unlock broader financing opportunities when they address resilience, environmental and community goals simultaneously.
5. Construction is and will be executed in phases to manage complexity, minimize disruption and allow adaptive learning as the project progresses.
6. By aligning with the Emerald Trail and broader urban revitalization plans, the project will ensure lasting community value beyond flood mitigation.

General Tips:

- The project reinforced that multi-benefit solutions unlock funding opportunities not typically available to single-purpose infrastructure.
- Leadership commitment was indispensable in that advancing an unconventional approach demanded persistence and willingness to challenge traditional practices.
- These insights highlight that technical excellence alone isn't enough; collaboration, vision and resilience drive lasting outcomes.

Budget: Total projected budget is $163.8 million

Funding Sources: Federal Grants, State Grants, General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Increased Tourism

City Contact:
Nikita Reed
NReed@coj.net
(904) 255-8702

Business Council Contact:
John Kiefer
kieferj@bv.com
(913) 458-9858

Coinbase: Equipping Mayors with Crypto and Blockchain Tools

Project Description: Crypto is no longer a niche issue. 52 million Americans own digital assets, every state has considered some form of digital asset legislation, and a new generation of mayors is turning crypto leadership into jobs, headlines, and constituent services.

Cities and states that lead on digital asset policy are positioning themselves to win the next decade of innovation, talent, and economic growth. Coinbase's Mayor toolkit is built to make that leadership easier by showcasing ways to leverage blockchain technology for your city.

The Mayor Crypto Toolkit is a free resource designed to meet your office wherever you are — whether you're crypto-curious or already leading the country.

Challenge: The City of Baltimore under Mayor Brandon Scott's leadership, launched the nation's first municipal blockchain pilot to record vacant property deeds.

Baltimore has approximately 13,600 vacant residential properties — roughly 7–8% of the city's total property inventory. The city lost out on an estimated $100 million annually in tax revenue from the vacancies, in addition to increased emergency services costs and a "contagion effect" of depressed neighboring property values.

Reclaiming vacant homes is a legal marathon. While standard home sales close in quickly, clearing titles on abandoned properties can take months or years of litigation. Each transfer — from city to developer to homeowner — requires a new title search, adding significant costs and forcing searches across fragmented agencies, courthouses, and archives.

Impact: Leveraging blockchain technology, Baltimore created a permanent "chain of custody" that eliminates redundant title searches, reducing fees for the municipality and homebuyers, and accelerating the return of vacant properties to the tax rolls.

"By adopting blockchain technology for title searches, we are taking a significant step towards modernizing our real estate processes," said Mayor Brandon Scott. "This initiative not only enhances transparency and trust in property transactions but also positions Baltimore as a leader using innovative tools to improve city government."

Baltimore is a model for what's possible when a Mayor, a forward-thinking team, and a trusted technology partner align around a clear municipal challenge.

https://www.coinbase.com/public-policy/advocacy/documents/loc-govt-crypto-playbook

How-to:

Getting Started

Access the website through the QR code below to learn more!

Assess your Crypto Readiness. Click on the QR code to take a 5-minute, 12-question diagnostic that scores your jurisdiction across payments, regulation, economic development, and civic innovation.

Access Crypto Information. Find Crypto 101 sessions and primers for policymakers that help demystify crypto and evaluate digital asset opportunities.

Connect to Coinbase Policy. Meet the Coinbase state policy team, peer mayors who've been where you are, and the Stand With Crypto advocates in your jurisdiction.

Budget: The Crypto Mayor Toolkit is free to participating cities

Funding Sources: Private Funding

Tags: Innovation, Cost Savings, Impact on City Economy

City Contact:
Ebony M. Thompson
City Solicitor
ebony.thompson@baltimorecity.gov

Business Council Contact:
Katy Ann Searcy
kathrynann.searcy@coinbase.com

Deloitte Consulting LLP (Deloitte): Transforming City of Miami Code Compliance Department with Generative AI Chatbot

Project Description: The City of Miami , (City) in collaboration with Deloitte, implemented its Amazon Web Services (AWS)-based Generative AI (GenAI) chatbot to support the Code Compliance Department. Integrated directly into the City's website, the chatbot enables constituents to receive fast, accurate, and multilingual responses to code-related questions directly through Miami.gov. Built on a Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG) architecture using AWS services, the solution modernizes resident engagement while improving operational efficiency and service consistency.

The chatbot implementation included scope items such as upgrading the underlying Large Language Model (LLM), expanding authoritative data sources (Miami.gov, Code Compliance content, and Municode), and adding Spanish and Haitian Creole language support. Automated web crawls and evaluation frameworks enable responses to remain current, accurate, and trustworthy.

Challenge: The Code Compliance Department experienced a high volume of constituent inquiries and significant walk-in traffic leading to service delays. Prior to the project, the chatbot had limited awareness and constrained knowledge coverage, resulting in continued reliance on staff for routine questions. These challenges increased operational strain and limited the City's ability to scale services effectively across its diverse population.

Impact: The implementation of the chatbot has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of Code Compliance Department operations by:

- Reducing the number of inquiries requiring live-agent support
- Providing consistent, authoritative information to constituents
- Improving response speed and customer satisfaction
- Decreasing walk-in desk traffic and reducing service delays leading to lowered operational costs
- Establishing a scalable digital foundation for future department expansion

How-to: Deloitte delivered an enhanced GenAI chatbot integrated into the Miami.gov Code Compliance Department landing page. Factors that led this project to success include:

- Keeping business leaders and City employees informed and engaged from the outset. This was important since they were invested and accountable for implementing a widespread and thorough change management and communications process.
- The system was designed, developed, and validated using a Hybrid - Agile approach, with regular system reviews throughout the development process. Business leaders, City employees, and end users could see progress through direct review of the system and provide actionable feedback.

General Tips: To complete this project, it was important to use trusted, validated data sources to maintain response accuracy. This digital service was designed with accessibility and language inclusion in mind to enable usability for all constituents. Ongoing evaluation and monitoring were implemented to build public trust, and solutions were developed for scalability to extend value across multiple City departments.

Funding Sources: General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings

City Contact:
Arturo Duque
CIO, City of Miami
aduque@miamigov.com

Business Council Contact:
Mohammad Fasihi
Managing Director, Deloitte Consulting LLP
mfasihi@deloitte.com

Destinations International: The Destinations Effect

Project Description: The Destination Effect highlights public-private partnership best practices demonstrating how destination organizations help communities thrive. Through destination promotion, brand management, placemaking and quality of life initiatives, these organizations work alongside local governments, businesses and community partners to strengthen economies, support small businesses, attract investment and foster civic pride.

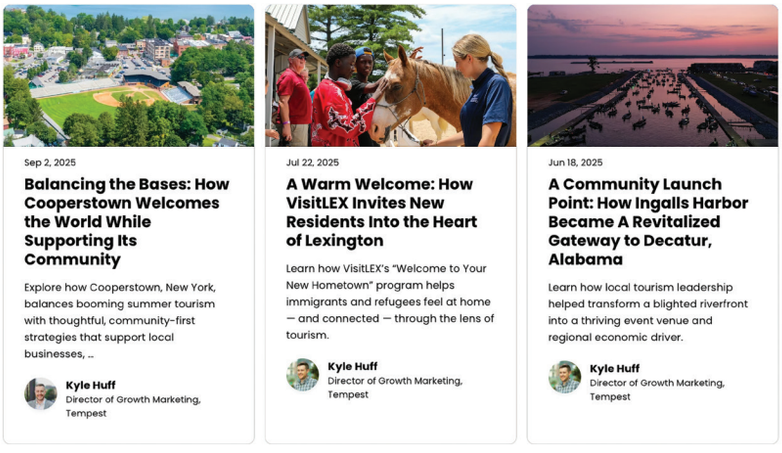
A curated website, DestinationEffect.com, features a growing collection of case studies that demonstrate this work in action and offer mayors practical examples of how destination marketing can support long term community resilience, economic opportunity and a stronger sense of place for residents, visitors and businesses alike.

Challenge: Cities face growing competition to attract the talent, investment, visitors, events, and business opportunities that are the backbone of the local economy and community vibrancy. The challenge is ensuring that a community stands out in a crowded marketplace while also strengthening local pride, supporting small businesses and improving quality of life for residents.

The Destination Effect addresses this challenge by showing how destination organizations work to elevate a city's identity, promote its assets and connect destination engagement and marketing to broader civic goals. Through brand management, placemaking, visitor economy development and community storytelling, these organizations help cities build visibility, strengthen economic resilience and create a stronger sense of place for residents, visitors and businesses.

Impact: DestinationEffect.com highlights how destination organizations work with local governments, businesses, and community partners to strengthen the communities they serve. These case studies show how destination promotion drives cultural, social and economic investment while also supporting broader civic priorities.

For mayors, The Destination Effect demonstrates that destination organizations do more than attract visitors. They help support local businesses, foster community pride, enhance public spaces, attract investment and contribute to long-term economic and cultural vitality. By aligning tourism strategies with resident priorities, destination organizations serve as valuable public private partners in building more resilient, inclusive and prosperous communities.



How-to: Mayors can strengthen the impact of major city initiatives by engaging their destination organization early in the planning process. Whether the focus is downtown revitalization, workforce attraction, cultural investment, small business support or community engagement, destination organizations bring valuable expertise in storytelling, audience development, brand management and public private partnership.

These organizations are more than tourism marketers. They are brand stewards of how a city is understood, experienced and remembered. By partnering with them, mayors can help shape the city's narrative, communicate progress to residents and external audiences and demonstrate how public investment supports quality of life.

To begin, mayors can invite their destination organization into strategy discussions, align messaging around shared civic priorities, identify opportunities to elevate local businesses and cultural assets and use visitor economy data to show measurable community benefits. When city leadership and destination organizations work together, they can build stronger public understanding, increase local pride and advance a more resilient, competitive, and future ready community.

General Tips: In many examples featured on DestinationEffect.com, the strongest outcomes occur when city leadership and the destination organization are closely aligned. This often includes collaboration with the mayor, the mayor's office, city council or senior staff focused on economic development, communications, community engagement or public affairs.

A helpful first step is to identify a primary city liaison to coordinate with the destination organization, align messaging and keep the project connected to shared community priorities. This helps clarify goals, elevate resident and business benefits, and maintain momentum.

Mayors can use The Destination Effect examples to identify opportunities in downtown revitalization, small business support, cultural investment, placemaking, workforce attraction, resident engagement and civic pride.

Tags: Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Increased Tourism, Business Benefits

Business Council Contact:
Destinations International
advocacy@destinationsinternational.org

Enterprise Mobility: Leading the Charge: Nation's First All-Electric Police Fleet

Project Description: Enterprise Fleet Management (EFM) and the City of South Pasadena partnered to successfully transition its entire police fleet from gasoline-powered vehicles to electric vehicles. Through this collaboration, South Pasadena became the first city in the nation to deploy a fully electric police fleet, supported by EFM's expertise in fleet planning, vehicle acquisition, lifecycle management, and strategic electrification. EFM worked closely with city leaders and police officials to assess operational needs, select purpose-built electric vehicles, and implement a scalable, cost-effective transition strategy. This public-private partnership reduced greenhouse gas emissions, lowered fuel and maintenance costs, and enhanced South Pasadena's leadership in sustainability and innovation. The initiative serves as a replicable model for cities nationwide seeking to modernize fleets, meet climate goals, and maintain high-performance public safety services while advancing environmental stewardship.

Challenge: The City of South Pasadena sought to modernize its police fleet while advancing ambitious climate and sustainability goals. Traditional internal combustion vehicles presented ongoing challenges, including high fuel and maintenance costs, greenhouse gas emissions, and misalignment with the City's commitment to environmental leadership. At the same time, transitioning a police fleet to electric vehicles posed operational concerns-such as vehicle range, charging infrastructure, performance reliability, and the ability to support 24/7 public safety demands.

The challenge was to maintain or enhance police service levels while shifting to an entirely new fleet model. This required overcoming uncertainty around total cost of ownership, ensuring officer safety and vehicle readiness, and implementing a scalable solution without disrupting essential emergency response operations.

Impact: The project delivered significant environmental, operational, and financial benefits while maintaining high-quality public safety services. By transitioning to a fully electric police fleet, South Pasadena substantially reduced greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollutants, reinforcing its leadership in sustainability. The City also achieved lower fuel and maintenance costs, helping stabilize long-term fleet expenses and improve budget predictability.

Operationally, the electric vehicles proved capable of meeting the demands of 24/7 policing, demonstrating that electric vehicle technology can support critical emergency services without compromising performance or reliability. The partnership also strengthened collaboration between the public and private sectors, building internal confidence in fleet electrification.

Importantly, South Pasadena's success established a scalable, real-world model for other municipalities interested in broader adoption of electric fleets and advancing climate and clean transportation goals across the public sector.

How-to: South Pasadena's all-electric police fleet was developed through a structured public-private partnership with EFM:

1. City leadership and police officials partnered with EFM to evaluate fleet usage, duty cycles, and sustainability goals.
2. EFM conducted a comprehensive total cost of ownership analysis, comparing internal combustion and electric vehicles.
3. Drawing from its ability to work with all major OEMs, EFM helped identify purpose-built electric police vehicles best suited patrol operations.
4. Charging infrastructure was designed and implemented to align with fleet usage and shift patterns, ensuring uptime and minimizing service disruption.
5. Officers and fleet personnel received training, supported by EFM's local account teams.
6. EFM continues to deliver lifecycle management, analytics, and optimization, ensuring long-term success and scalability.

General Tips: Stakeholder engagement is critical, bringing together police leadership, fleet managers, finance teams, sustainability staff, and the mayor helped build alignment, momentum, and public trust.

Budget: A single fixed project cost is less applicable because the fleet transition was structured through EFM's lifecycle funding model, which spreads costs over time rather than requiring large upfront capital.

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Other

Additional Investment: The project leveraged multiple complementary investment sources to support implementation and reduce financial burden on the City.

Tags: Innovation, Cost Savings, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy

South Pasadena Police Department's all-electric patrol fleet charging on-site, demonstrating how strategic infrastructure and fleet planning enable continuous, public safety operations.

City leaders and Enterprise Fleet Management representatives celebrate the launch of South Pasadena's all-electric police fleet, highlighting the power of public-private partnership in driving sustainable innovation.

Business Council Contact:
Chloe Caylor
chloe.caylor@em.com

Google: Chattanooga Builds a Safer, More Responsive City with Google AI

Project Description: Chattanooga uses Google Cloud's integrated AI platform to empower its workforce, improve public safety, and build a more responsive city.

City leaders recognized a critical need to modernize their entire approach to technology. They needed tools that would foster a culture of seamless, real-time collaboration and empower their workforce to better serve the public. After a thorough evaluation, Chattanooga selected Google Workspace as the foundation for its transformation.

To support its vision of building a truly data-driven Smart City, Chattanooga turned to Google again. The city created a single source of truth with BigQuery, using Google partner Data Driven for the migration. The city is centralizing dozens of datasets previously locked in separate systems, including internal siloed operational data, alongside valuable public data housed in external ecosystems.

This unified view allows city leaders to move beyond simple departmental reports and ask complex, cross-functional questions for the first time. By combining these disparate sources, Chattanooga is unlocking a deeper understanding of its operations, and paving the way for more equitable and effective governance.

Challenge: Prior to its transformation, the City of Chattanooga faced significant internal technology challenges that stifled innovation and frustrated employees. The city's IT department was caught in a reactive cycle, spending nearly 90% of its time on basic maintenance of aging, on-premise systems. This left little capacity for strategic projects that could improve city services. Daily work was a study in inefficiency for employees: collaboration meant emailing different versions of documents back and forth, leading to version control issues, while secure mobile access to core productivity tools like email and calendars was a constant struggle.

Additionally, the city faced complex challenges hindering its "Smart City" vision: the city's most valuable data was siloed across dozens of disconnected systems, making a unified view of city operations impossible.

Impact: The city's transformation has delivered measurable improvements.

IT administration productivity has been boosted by 65%, fundamentally changing how the city operates. Staff can now draft official correspondence 75% faster using Gemini for Google Workspace and complex regulatory research that once took hours is completed in seconds using Gemini Enterprise Agent Platform (Formerly Vertex AI) and NotebookLM.

The city's efforts to break down data silos is poised to power its first critical initiative: a crash analytics project that aims to transform a once cumbersome process into a dynamic discovery tool. Crash data from the state's Titan platform, previously pulled into static spreadsheets for hours of manual analysis, is now being piped directly into BigQuery. The objective is to create a constantly refreshed, single source of truth that will help the city make better road safety decisions, faster – from prioritizing which intersections need new traffic signals to informing long-term city planning and budgeting for road improvements.

Chattanooga's initiatives represent a fundamental shift toward leveraging AI to build a more responsive, efficient, and intelligent government.

Chattanooga Tennessee Skyline at Sunset

How-to: To replicate Chattanooga's success, cities can follow this strategic roadmap:

- Begin by enhancing existing workloads with AI-powered productivity tools. Deploying Gemini for Google Workspace allows staff to immediately automate administrative task. For Chattanooga, that meant cutting drafting times by over 75% and building the necessary cultural momentum for broader digital transformation.
- Before scaling, appoint formal leadership to create a Security Signal. This ensures all AI initiatives are secure-by-default and transparent, maintaining public trust. By formalizing governance early, the city ensures that technology remains a strategic asset for security and mission outcomes while protecting long-term equity and data sovereignty.
- Apply AI to solve specific, high-impact departmental c hallenges. Use Gemini Enterprise Agent Platform to create searchable knowledge bases from complex documents. This turns hours of manual research into seconds of natural language querying, helping city permitters or code enforcement officers provide faster, more accurate services to residents.
- Transitioning from legacy maintenance to Google Workspace increased Chattanooga's case IT productivity by 65%. Break down silos by centralizing disparate datasets in BigQuery, using Looker to ensure agencies operate from a single, trusted source of truth for critical decisions. Leverage the newly expanded data ecosystem to launch AI agents securely to accomplish more complex, automated workflows

General Tips:

- A critical lesson from Chattanooga is the importance of reframing AI: it should be introduced to employees as a productivity tool that makes their specific jobs easier, not as a replacement for staff.
- Successful replication requires high-level buy-in; Mayor Kelly's focus on "making the traffic lights turn on time" helped ground high-tech concepts in tangible quality-of-life wins that residents could understand.
- Additionally, utilizing the semantic layer in data analytics is vital – it ensures that when different departments look at a map of high-risk intersections, they are all seeing the same trusted calculations.

Budget: Chattanooga spends approximately $1.1 million per year in Google Cloud Platform and Google Workspace

Funding Sources: General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Environment Impact

City Contact:
Mayor Tim Kellyr
tkelly@chattanooga.gov

Jerele Neeld, CIO
jneeld@chattanooga.gov

Business Council Contact:
Steven Becker
beckersteven@google.com

Jairobe McPherson
jairobe@google.com

Guild: How the City of Birmingham, UAB Medicine, and Guild transformed workforce training into job placement outcomes

Project Description: Birmingham has long been committed to workforce innovation. Through the Good Jobs Challenge and its Reinvest initiative, the City has invested in expanding economic opportunity while positioning itself as an employer destination. When the City sought a partner to sharpen focus on job placement outcomes, it brought in Guild.

Combining regional labor market data with direct consultation with UAB Medicine, the largest employer in the state, Guild identified a chronically unfilled role and gateway to high-need healthcare careers: Certified Medical Assistant. Guild co-designed a job-aligned pathway for underemployed and unemployed residents, including employer-vetted coursework, a 100-hour clinical externship, and the technology to manage enrollment, track learner progress, coordinate hands-on experience, and provide real-time pipeline visibility.

As a result: residents are moving into resilient careers, with learners tracking toward 70%+ program completion; UAB Medicine has a reliable pipeline for roles it struggled to fill; and the City is demonstrating impact as the model expands across multiple high-priority sectors and employers.

Challenge: Cities investing in workforce development often face a shared challenge: training programs expand, but job placement outcomes lag. Without a clear pathway from training to hire — including the hands-on experience employers require — results are inconsistent, and employer engagement remains broad but shallow.

As a result for employers like UAB Medicine, motivated candidates — including contract workers onsite and previously screened-out applicants — lack a structured path forward, while administrators lack the tools to effectively track progress and connect candidates to in-demand roles.

Birmingham needed a partner who could bring all of that together — employer demand, learner experience, and operational infrastructure — in one coordinated model.

Impact: The partnership is delivering results across stakeholders. UAB Medicine is strengthening its pipeline for critical roles, while jobseekers with no prior clinical experience are moving into family-sustaining careers.

Performance has exceeded projections, with learners tracking toward 70%+ completion and advancing faster than comparable allied health programs. Examples include a retail team lead transitioning into healthcare, an ESL teacher aide pursuing a path to nursing, and a Birmingham resident who discovered healthcare through caregiving.

The City is now building on this success by expanding the model through Reinvest into additional sectors, including high-need manufacturing roles like CDL drivers and maintenance technicians.

Sarah Wilson, Former Deputy Director for the City of Birmingham, shared: "Guild brought a fundamentally different model. They started with the employer, identified high-need roles, and built training around those jobs. That alignment — combined with hands-on learning — changed the game for us."

How-to: - Start with labor market data and a clear hiring target. Guild analyzed regional demand and worked directly with UAB Medicine to identify Certified Medical Assistant as a high-vacancy role suited for non-traditional talent pools. This data-backed focus gave the City and employer a clear placement goal.

- Secure deep employer buy-in before building the program. Guild engaged talent acquisition, hiring managers, operations leaders, and onboarding staff — the stakeholders who determine hiring outcomes. This co-design process ensured alignment with real screening and hiring criteria.
- Build the pathway around the job. The model included vetted, cohort-based coursework paired with a 100-hour externship hosted onsite at UAB Medicine — giving learners direct exposure to UAB's environment before their first interview. Recruitment focused on high-intent candidates, including previously rejected applicants and workers already in contract onsite roles like patient transport.
- Support program success with scalable technology. Guild's talent placement platform managed the program end-to-end. Learners received cohorted learning with peer connection, in-platform personalized role guidance, milestone tracking, and coaching. Employers and administrators gained real-time visibility into cohort progress and job-ready candidates, for more proactive, effective hiring.
- Hands-on experience bridges training and placement. A 100-hour externship at UAB provided the real-world experience that had been a barrier to hire — giving learners exposure to UAB's environment before their first interview, and giving UAB confidence in candidate readiness.
- Scale across sectors. Birmingham is now applying the same model through Guild to additional sectors like manufacturing through Reinvest.

Budget: This pilot was funded through an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant awarded to the City of Birmingham.

Funding Sources: Federal Grants

Tags: Innovation, Impact on City Economy, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Coreata R. Houser
Director, Department of Innovation and Economic Opportunity,
City of Birmingham Mayor's Office
coreata.houser@birminghamal.gov

Business Council Contact:
Zoe Weintraub Barrett
Head of Public Sector Partnerships, Guild
zoe.weintraub@guild.com

HDR: Omaha RiverFront Revitalization

Project Description: The Gene Leahy Mall is an urban oasis with a fractured deck ribbon that acts as a "play spine," warping up and down to reveal a rope forest, slides, climbing caves, and tunnels. Play arches leap across the ribbon and create climbable bridges.

Heartland of America transformed into a haven for all. A gleaming new skate ribbon pairs with gondola rides around the lake. Terraced seating provides breathtaking views while a 100,000-square-foot event lawn and lakeside amphitheatre continue an entertainment theme. Most visible, a towering overlook, "Farnam Pier", extends more than 200 feet out to the Missouri River, connecting the park to the river and featuring changing lights, stairs, ramps, and seating.

Finally, Lewis & Clark Landing is topped with a climbing tower and surrounded by nets, hammocks, an adventure path, swings, slides, water, and sand, the area is a play space for all. It includes climbing walls, log scrambles, boulders, ziplines, and water elements alongside gathering, picnicking, and watching areas. An urban beach provides river views while sand volleyball courts offer opportunities for pickup games and regulation play.

Challenge: The development of the parks presented very difficult engineering challenges including infrastructure dating back to the 1850's, an abandoned lead smelting plant site, construction next to historic buildings, and extensive permitting with the USACE, Union Pacific Railroad, BNSF, NDEE and the NDOT. The project planning required extensive coordination with City departments and public outreach to address street closures, construction traffic, and construction disruptions in downtown Omaha.

The project required over 75 permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE), Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), Union Pacific Railroad, BNSF Railroad, and the City of Omaha. Taking a collaborative approach beginning before final design, the team met with each agency to present concepts, discuss challenges, and develop a path to obtain permits. The agencies became partners, participating in biweekly or monthly meetings to address issues throughout design and construction. The extensive coordination kept them informed of progress and allowed informed submittal reviews.

Impact: For decades, Omaha area residents desired to access the river. The "back to the river" movement began in the 1970s, when Omaha and Council Bluffs maintained separate plans for developing the riverfront. The RiverFront project combined these plans to create a joint recreational plan in 2018. The plan leveraged the river and riverfront as an engine for sustainable recreational, cultural, and economic development and focused on connectivity, experiences and activation.

The challenge of creating a unified riverfront is inherent — two states, two counties, two cities, multiple neighborhoods, public and private space, dozens of uses, highly diverse natural and built environments, and many jurisdictions and constituents. While challenging, the diverse landscape also provided opportunities to make this RiverFront project a model for redevelopment across the country.

How-to: Creating a master plan allowed the team to develop a unique, broad vision for Omaha's future and a comprehensive package of goals, policies, and standards. The team focused on environment, public facilities, housing, transportation, future use, parks, urban development, and urban design. The environment element creates a vision for the long-term health and sustainability of the Omaha community and the natural resources and ecosystems it depends upon.

The team expected major transportation impacts. The project began with a traffic analysis that considered construction schedules, high-impact commute times, and the city's major events to determine street closures and alternative routes.

New roadway designs intentionally slim driving lanes to slow traffic and keep multimodal transit at the forefront. We converted driving lanes into bike and drop-off lanes and parking, and developed pedestrian promenades. The Gene Leahy Mall features new pedestrian nodes at each corner, bus stops, and a trail along Douglas Street.

The team developed new signage, widened sidewalks, added crosswalks, enhanced walkways, expanded bike lanes, and restored pedestrian bridges.

General Tips: The RiverFront transformed three underutilized parks. The project's success was dependent on:

- A generous philanthropic community that made the necessary financial commitments.
- A strong, popular mayor who committed city resources.
- An oversight entity, MECA, with the expertise and experience to manage design, construction, and programming parks after their opening.

Budget: $325 million

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Foundations, General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Increased Tourism, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Katie Bassett, Vice President
kbassett@omahameca.com
(402)599-6915

Business Council Contact:
Chris Koenig
Senior Civil Project Manager
chris.koenig@hdrinc.com
(402) 548-5112

Intelligent Security Systems (ISS): Advancing Pedestrian Safety Through Public-Private Partnership

Project Description: The City of Dublin, Ohio, teamed up with Intelligent Security Systems (ISS) to solve a serious community problem. Residents worried about the combination of inadequate lighting and fast cars at one of the most problematic crosswalks in the city. To address this, the city deployed our SecurOS® Soffit system.

The Soffit completely changes how we illuminate streets for pedestrians. Standard streetlights stay on all night and create unwanted light pollution. The Soffit system is different. It uses AI-powered analytics to spot people as they walk up to the crosswalk. Once someone is detected, it triggers a dynamic LED lighting array that physically escorts them across the street. The light shines only on the person and their direct path.

This teamwork allowed Dublin to test and install a brand-new safety tool. It grabs the attention of drivers exactly when they need to slow down. By joining forces, the city and ISS turned resident feedback into real action. We built a smart, data-driven solution that protects people, uses less energy, and sets a strong example for modern traffic safety.

Challenge: Dublin's Brand Road crossing near Coventry Woods Drive needed a solution that could protect vulnerable road users—and traditional crosswalk systems alone weren't enough. Standard approaches like push-buttons, RRFBs, and HAWK signals often depend on active participation from pedestrians or drivers and can suffer from inconsistent activation and compliance. These methods either light up an entire area – which wastes energy and creates light pollution – or require additional, often costly infrastructure components, yet still can't guarantee focused driver attention just as a pedestrian begins to cross.

With the Soffit, the City of Dublin deployed a single, self-contained device that uses advanced video analytics to automatically detect and protect pedestrians when it matters most—no user input, no manual triggers. The system illuminates only when and where someone is crossing, offering highly visible, targeted LED lighting to "escort" pedestrians safely while minimizing excess light and distraction for drivers. This approach both increases driver yielding rates and reduces unnecessary illumination, directly addressing safety concerns.

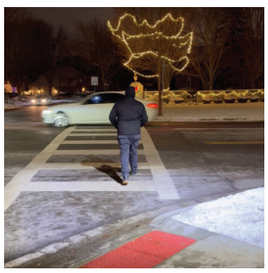
Impact: The deployment of the Soffit delivered an immediate and highly effective boost to public safety in Dublin. By providing on-demand, targeted lighting, the system successfully increased driver awareness during nighttime hours without causing blinding glare or unnecessary light pollution.

The most significant impact we observed is a direct, positive change in driver behavior. The city noted in its post-deployment feedback that the heightened visibility has directly led to more drivers yielding to pedestrians. This achieves the core goal of the project: creating a safer, more visible environment for residents crossing busy roads.(You can watch the Soffit in action in Dublin here: https://www.10tv.com/article/news/local/dublin-ai-powered-crosswalk-lighting-system-improve-pedestrian-safety/530-38eb0d46-937b-4e9c-9a1b-786e4cd6902d).

Additionally, the system provides city planners with actionable traffic and pedestrian data.

We use this information to monitor crossing habits and evaluate future safety needs. The project successfully resolved community safety concerns and established a scalable, data-driven model for enhancing pedestrian safety citywide.

The SecurOS® Soffit provides dynamic LED illumination for pedestrians at the Brand Road crossing near Coventry Woods Drive in Dublin, Ohio.



A pedestrian is illuminated by the SecurOS® Soffit at the Brand Road crossing in Dublin, Ohio.

How-to:

Step 1: Identify the Problem
Start by listening to the community. Dublin residents raised valid safety concerns about poor nighttime visibility and speeding cars. The city then backed up this feedback with hard data, reviewing pedestrian volumes, vehicle speed logs, and general traffic conditions to confirm the exact need for a targeted safety intervention.

Step 2: Choose the Right Partner
The city knew standard streetlights would not solve the problem. They stay on all night, create light pollution, and often fail to alert distracted drivers. To find a better way, Dublin decided to partner with ISS as the Soffit system offered the exact on-demand illumination needed to protect pedestrians and alert drivers.

Step 3: Plan the Technology Integration
Before installing equipment, plan the system layout to ensure the proper technical requirements are met. The Soffit pairs a high-definition IP camera system with a dynamic LED lighting array and a video analytics controller. We made sure this setup could connect with existing crosswalk safety measures, ensuring a layered approach to pedestrian safety.

Step 4: Deploy and Monitor
The Soffit system is now actively protecting residents in Dublin and there could be opportunities for future deployments at locations throughout the city. Moving forward, the city plans to use the statistical data the system collects to evaluate driver habits and improve future traffic planning.

General Tips: Search for Relevant Grants: Investigate potential funding opportunities like Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grants. These can help offset project costs and make it easier to bring advanced safety solutions to your city.

Budget: $15K

Funding Sources: General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Innovation

City Contact:
Marc Dilsaver
Transportation Program Manager
mdilsaver@dublin.oh.us

Business Council Contact:
Joe Harvey
ITS Market Sector Leader
joe.harvey@issivs.com

MOTOROLA SOLUTONS: The Modern-Day Fabric for a Community-Minded Police Force

Project Description: The City of Buckeye, Arizona, is ranked as one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States, with its population nearly doubling in the last decade. This growth demands a technology-driven approach to policing, making modernization essential for public safety.

Police Chief Bob Sanders and his team are meeting this challenge with the strategic implementation of a comprehensive, integrated technology ecosystem from Motorola Solutions to enhance officer safety and elevate the quality of police services.

Challenge: The core challenge for the Buckeye Police Department is overcoming the limitations of fragmented, siloed technology systems from multiple vendors which hinder efficiency. The department's mission is to transition to a unified, integrated ecosystem to maximize efficiency for end-users (dispatchers, officers, and records clerks) and, crucially, to ensure all technology serves the perspective of the community and the end user, as emphasized by Chief Sanders.

Impact: An integrated ecosystem delivers a profound impact on officer safety and operational efficiency. "Real time tracking through our dispatch center gives us multiple points of connection to make sure we create the safest atmosphere for officers," the Chief explains. Automatic video activation, and live streaming capabilities will "automatically connect to our CAD and records management systems so there's less chance of losing information". With AI woven into the ecosystem at multiple points, it acts "like an early warning system that gives us instantaneous feedback" improving oversight.

Chief Sanders also highlights that, "the move to an integrated ecosystem is a matter of fiscal responsibility. It is adopted because "it's cost-effective and more efficient."

Chief Sanders is proud that his department is proactively addressing future demand. "My greatest source of pride is my team. They aren't afraid to implement technology and be early adopters." While most agencies are expected to adopt a single ecosystem by 2032, Chief Sanders says, "we're already there."

Buckeye (AZ) Police Department.

How-to:

Creating a Connected Technology Ecosystem for Public Safety

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EF1fklrg6M

General Tips: Components that make up the the Integrated Ecosystem for Buckeye PD : *APX Next radios with LTE, Wi-Fi, and GPS capability;

- SVX Body Cameras and Video Remote Speaker Microphones with direct radio audio integration;
- M500 in-car video systems equipped with automated license plate recognition. *CommandCentral Aware Plus for real-time intelligence and mapping
- CommandCentral DEMS Plus for digital evidence management with unlimited cloud storage
- CommandCentral Community Portal to enhance transparency and community engagement.

Funding Sources:

General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Impact on City Economy, Other:

City Contact:
Bob Sanders
Chief of Police, Buckeye AZ
rsanders@buckeyeaz.gov

Business Council Contact:
Matthew Starr
Matthew.Starr@motorolasolutions.com

Flynn Nogueira
Flynn.nogueira@motorolasolutions.com

National Apartment Association: Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) Leasing Training Academy (LTA)

Project Description: The Leasing Training Academy (LTA) is an award-winning public-private workforce development model that connects local residents to sustainable careers while addressing workforce shortages and strengthening the talent pipeline in the multifamily housing industry. This partnership brings together the Maryland Multi-Housing Association, local workforce agencies, and owner/manager member companies to create a direct pipeline from training to employment.

Through a 4.5-week innovate program, unemployed and underemployed individuals receive industry-led training—developed by an experienced operator—along with professional development and direct access to employer partners. By leveraging MMHA's membership network, participating companies serve as placement partners, actively interviewing and hiring graduates, which has been critical to achieving strong employment outcomes.

With an approximate 80% job placement rate, expansion across multiple Maryland jurisdictions, and over 170 graduates to date, LTA is a scalable, results-driven solution that supports employers, strengthens local economies, and creates meaningful career pathways for individuals.

Challenge: The Leasing Training Academy (LTA) improved workforce development and employment services by creating a direct, industry-aligned pathway to employment for residents who are unemployed or underemployed. Traditional workforce programs often struggle to connect training to real job opportunities; LTA addresses this gap by aligning training with employer needs and securing direct engagement from hiring partners.

The program also helps local jurisdictions address workforce shortages in the multifamily housing industry by building a consistent pipeline of job-ready talent. At the same time, it supports economic mobility by equipping participants with both technical and professional skills needed for long-term career growth.

By bridging the gap between workforce systems and employer demand, LTA strengthens the effectiveness of existing city services, improves job placement outcomes, and creates a more responsive, demand-driven workforce solution.

Impact: The Leasing Training Academy (LTA) has delivered measurable workforce and economic impact by creating a direct pathway to employment for local residents while addressing industry hiring needs. Since its launch in 2023, the program has graduated over 170 participants, with approximately 80% securing employment within the multifamily industry.

Beyond placement, LTA is creating long-term career pathways. Graduates are not only entering the workforce—they are advancing within it, with alumni progressing from leasing roles into positions such as Assistant Property Manager, Leasing Manager, and Property Manager. This upward mobility reflects both the quality of training and the strength of employer partnerships.

For employers, LTA provides a reliable pipeline of trained, job-ready candidates, reducing time-to-hire and supporting retention. For local jurisdictions, the program strengthens workforce systems by aligning training with real-time employer demand, ultimately driving economic mobility and community growth.

How-to:

1. MMHA recognized an opportunity to connect unemployed and underemployed residents to sustainable careers.
2. The LTA curriculum was developed to ensure participants received practical, industry-relevant training.
3. State and federal workforce funding was leveraged so the program could be offered at no cost to participants or hiring employers.
4. MMHA engaged local workforce agencies and leveraged its owner/manager member companies as employer and placement partners.
5. Placement, advancement, and employer feedback were tracked to evaluate impact and strengthen future cohorts.

General Tips: A key factor in LTA's success is the intentional alignment between workforce development and industry demand, combined with a high level of rigor and accountability. The program is led by experienced industry professionals who not only instruct, but also serve as career coaches.

Cities looking to replicate this model should prioritize employer buy-in, sustainable funding, and a structured, high-touch training experience.

Budget: $45,000 in initial startup funding was required to launch the program. Ongoing costs are supported through state and federal workforce funding, allowing the program to be offered at no cost to participants or employers. The estimated cost of training is approximately $5,000 per student.

Funding Sources: Federal Grants, State Grants, General Purpose City Funds, Other:

Additional Investment: Yes. In addition to state and federal workforce funding, the program leverages significant in-kind support from industry partners and the Maryland Multi-Housing Association. Employer partners contribute time and resources by participating in interviews, hiring graduates, and supporting program engagement. MMHA also provides program oversight, curriculum delivery, and operational support, ensuring successful implementation and sustainability.

Tags: Innovation, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Walter L. Simmons
Secretary of Social & Economic Mobility, Department of Social & Economic Mobility
walter.simmons@maryland.gov
(410) 697-9600
web: https://economicmobility.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx

Business Council Contact:
April Capone
Director of External Affairs and Affiliate Engagement, National Apartment Association
(203) 915-9594
Acapone@naahq.org

National Forum for Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention: Move with the Mayor®

Project Description: Across the country, communities are experiencing rising rates of chronic disease, social isolation, and mental health challenges. These trends are showing up in everyday life, shaping how people feel, connect, and stay healthy over time.

Through Move with the Mayor® (MWTM), the National Forum for Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention helps mayors bring practical, community-based health initiatives directly to residents. MWTM provides seasonal campaigns, communications tools, and technical assistance.

These resources help communities promote physical activity, mental well-being, and preventive care in accessible ways. More than 230 mayors across 39 states have used MWTM to strengthen community engagement, expand access to health resources, and support healthier behaviors at the local level.

Challenge: Municipal leaders are often expected to address complex health issues — ranging from mental health to chronic disease prevention — without the benefit of dedicated public health infrastructure or sustained funding.

Even when resources are available, translating health guidance into meaningful community participation remains difficult. Residents may not engage with traditional messaging, and one-time events rarely lead to lasting behavior change.

As a result, cities need approaches that are easy to implement, adaptable to local contexts, and capable of turning awareness into consistent engagement.

Impact: In Spring 2026, 50+ mayors launched the MWTM Mental Health & Physical Activity Challenge.

"[MWTM is] just a fun thing for me — exercising, having fun, and talking about how we can address mental health and anxiety in our community," said Laurel, MD, Mayor Keith Sydnor.

Orion, MI, Supervisor Chris Barnett made all programming free. "[MWTM] was great," Barnett said. "We had people that signed up for those classes after they tried them one time."

Communities expanded these efforts through walking groups, yoga, and fitness classes.

The flu immunization PSA campaign paired 10 mayors with pharmacists, generating 5.8 million impressions and a 92.59% engagement rate. In Jonesboro, GA, pharmacist Jozetta DeJean reported an "almost 300%" increase in weekly vaccinations.

The cholesterol initiative engaged 11 mayors and clinicians, generating 4.9 million impressions and an 83.04% engagement rate. Clarkston, GA, Mayor Beverly Burks said residents recognized her from campaign videos.

The active living initiative strengthened partnerships among mayors, health departments, providers, and community organizations, supporting mobile clinics, shared outreach, and coordinated programming.

Residents, mayors, clinicians, and community partners come together through Move with the Mayor® to support movement, connection, and community health.

How-to: MWTM offers a structured yet flexible approach that mayors can adapt to their needs at no cost:

- Mayors launch campaigns focused on mental health, active living, and preventive care throughout the year.
- Mayors lead or participate in accessible activities, including walks, fitness classes, and screenings.
- Mayors use ready-to-use messaging and materials to share consistent, fact-based information.
- Select mayors receive assistance to produce and promote public service announcement (PSA) videos.
- Mayors participate in webinars and briefings to share strategies and learn from peers.

General Tips: Mayors who see the strongest results:

- Meet residents where they are. Residents are more likely to participate when activities are free, easy to access, and held in familiar community spaces.
- Pair messaging with action. Communities that combine social media outreach with in-person events see stronger engagement than those relying on a single channel.
- Use trusted local voices. Partnerships with pharmacists, clinicians, and community organizations increase credibility and reach.
- Make it easy to stay involved. Providing multiple opportunities to participate — events, existing programs, and community-based activities — keeps residents engaged over time.
- Build on what already exists. Cities that integrate MWTM into existing programs and partnerships sustain momentum beyond the campaign period.

Budget: Move with the Mayor® (MWTM) is designed to be accessible for cities of all sizes. There is no cost for participation, allowing mayors to focus resources on community engagement and local implementation. Cities typically designate a staff liaison to coordinate activities and leverage existing partnerships, events, and communication channels to carry out the initiative.

Funding Sources: Federal Grants, Other

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Increased Tourism, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Supervisor Chris Barnett (Orion, MI)
cbarnett@oriontownship.org

Business Council Contact:
John Clymer
Executive Director
(202) 903-7303
john.clymer@nationalforum.org

Jen Childress
Director of Programs
(515) 422-4498
jen.childress@nationalforum.org

Populous: City of San Antonio: Downtown Sports & Entertainment District (Project Marvel)

Project Description: Project Marvel is a major public-private initiative led by the City of San Antonio to transform downtown into a vibrant Sports and Entertainment District. The City partnered with Populous to develop a comprehensive vision and master plan that repositions downtown as a regional destination for sports, conventions, culture and tourism. The plan integrates a new arena, an expanded convention center, mixed-use development and enhanced public spaces, while prioritizing connectivity between downtown and the East Side. A proposed land bridge and multimodal transportation improvements reconnect historically divided neighborhoods and improve access across the urban core. Developed through stakeholder collaboration, community engagement and market analysis, the master plan establishes a framework for long-term growth, investment and inclusive urban revitalization.

Challenge: Downtown San Antonio has long faced challenges related to connectivity, underused land and fragmented development patterns. Key areas, particularly between the East Side and downtown core, have remained physically and economically disconnected. The project addresses the complexity of assembling land, aligning stakeholders and structuring a partnership with Spurs Sports & Entertainment to anchor redevelopment. Coordinating infrastructure, transportation and phased development within a dense urban environment required strong public leadership and cross-sector collaboration. The goal was to create a unified vision that reconnects communities, supports equitable growth and catalyzes long-term economic development.

Impact: Project Marvel positions downtown San Antonio for transformative growth by turning underused land into a dynamic, connected district. The planned return of the Spurs to downtown, anchored by a new state-of-the-art arena, is a major catalyst for investment and activity. The project enhances walkability, strengthens connections between neighborhoods and creates new opportunities for public gathering and cultural engagement. By integrating infrastructure, development and public space, the district supports job creation, tourism and local business growth. This coordinated approach establishes a clear path for implementation and reinforces downtown as a center for economic and social vitality.

San Antonio Downtown Sports & Entertainment District integrates a new arena, an expanded convention center, mixed-use development and enhanced public spaces.

Enhanced walkability and street-level activation strengthen neighborhood connections, creating vibrant spaces for gathering and cultural engagement.

How-to: Populous partnered with the City of San Antonio to guide a visioning process for a downtown Sports and Entertainment District. The effort began by establishing a shared vision grounded in the city's identity, community priorities and long-term economic goals. This approach combined market analysis, site evaluation and feasibility studies with a collaborative design process to align stakeholders early and define a clear direction for growth.

A comprehensive master plan was developed to integrate seven core projects: a new sports and entertainment arena; an expanded convention center; a new headquarters hotel; a renovated mid-capacity entertainment venue; strategic renovations to The Alamo Dome; a deck park over Interstate 37 connecting East San Antonio to the new district; and a mixed-entertainment district for year-round activations through land use, infrastructure and public space, anchored by a new arena and surrounding mixed-use development.

Connectivity and mobility strategies – including a proposed land bridge – were incorporated to reconnect downtown with the East Side and improve access across the urban core. This vision-driven framework helped align public and private partners, including Spurs Sports & Entertainment, and established a foundation for phased implementation, funding strategies and long-term investment.

General Tips: Successful large-scale urban districts require early alignment between vision, infrastructure and economic strategy. Strong public leadership and investment in planning help de-risk complex projects and attract private partners. Prioritizing connectivity and public space ensures long-term community value. Engaging anchor tenants early can accelerate momentum and unlock broader development opportunities. Cross-sector collaboration is essential to advancing implementation and sustaining impact.

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Municipal Bonds, State Grants, General Purpose City Funds, Other:

Additional Investment: Yes. Private development capital, infrastructure funding and long-term phased investment associated with the arena and surrounding mixed-use district will support implementation.

Tags: Innovation, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Increased Tourism, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Shanon Shea Miller
Chief Downtown Officer
(210) 207-8316
Shanon.Miller@sanantonio.gov

Business Council Contact:
Michael Lockwood
Senior Principal, Global Head of Convention and Exhibition Center Design
michael.lockwood@populous.com

Salesforce: Fresno 311: Building a Connected, Transparent City on a Single Digital Platform

Project Description: Home to over half a million residents in California's San Joaquin Valley, the City of Fresno set out to redefine how a city delivers accessible, responsive public services. The City partnered with Salesforce to launch its 311 contact center on FedRAMP-authorized Salesforce Government Cloud, integrating city departments and digitizing service requests into a single omnichannel experience. Residents can now submit requests, report issues, and track progress through whichever channel works best for them: the FresGo app, community portal, web, phone, chatbot, or live agent. Fresno is now expanding the platform with Agentforce and Agentforce Voice, giving residents conversational, 24/7 access to city information, service requests, and case updates online or by phone. On the back end, requests route automatically to the right service teams, field workers are assigned through a dedicated app, and AI-generated summaries help live agents continue conversations seamlessly when escalation is needed. Deployed in six months, the platform now manages 3.5 million records across city departments.

Challenge: Fresno's 311 team was committed to helping residents connect with city services, but the existing infrastructure made that harder than it needed to be. Data was siloed across departments, reporting was inconsistent, and residents had limited ways to engage outside traditional phone lines during business hours. Internal teams also lacked a streamlined way to intake, route, and resolve requests across service divisions.

At the same time, resident expectations were changing. People increasingly expected faster responses, greater transparency, and digital experiences that felt intuitive and accessible. Fresno accelerated its 311 modernization efforts to better connect residents with government services and information.

The city needed one source of truth, stronger reporting capabilities, and a platform flexible enough to evolve alongside Fresno's operational needs while supporting future AI-powered services.

Impact: The results span efficiency, transparency, accessibility, and resident experience. All service requests are now publicly viewable, and the city can push real-time alerts through the FresGo app, including notifications about street closures before they happen. Self-service functionality allows 311 agents to focus support where it matters most, while workflows automatically route requests to the appropriate service teams.

Fresno is now expanding those capabilities with Agentforce and Agentforce Voice, enabling residents to ask questions, log tickets, request updates, and access city information conversationally online or by phone, 24/7. AI-generated summaries also help live agents continue conversations seamlessly when escalation is needed.

Every city department now operates on the same platform, giving leadership access to accurate, real-time reporting and operational visibility.

The platform manages 3.5 million records, including 900,000 historical cases migrated into the system, 500,000 picture records, and more than 100,000 new cases entered since launch.

How-to:

1. City leadership aligned on one source of truth for all resident data, streamlined internal workflows, and a resident experience that matched growing expectations for government accountability and transparency.
2. Fresno launched its 311 contact center on FedRAMP-authorized Salesforce Government Cloud, ensuring the platform met federal security standards.
3. A community portal built on Experience Cloud became the front door for residents. The FresGo app, chatbot, web portal, and phone channel were connected through omnichannel functionality, allowing residents to engage. Fresno is now expanding that experience with Agentforce and Agentforce Voice, enabling residents to ask questions, request updates, and access city information, 24/7.
4. Assigned cases flow into a field service app used by city workers. Once a request is resolved, the resident is automatically notified.
5. With every department on a single platform, the city gained reliable, real-time reporting across service divisions. Data Cloud is helping Fresno bring together Salesforce and third-party data to support future AI-powered services and reporting.

General Tips: Fresno's 311 system was deployed in six months. The no-code/low-code toolkit allowed the city to configure workflows and intake forms without extensive IT overhead.

Fresno's approach has been to treat AI less like a scripted chatbot and more like a digital service assistant that can understand resident intent, ask clarifying questions, and guide people toward the next best action.

Cities considering a similar project should prioritize bringing departments onto a single platform early. Fresno found that a unified system improved reporting, operational visibility, and the city's ability to expand services over time.

Budget: Project cost $1.1M

Funding Sources: Municipal Bonds, General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Pedro Braz
Senior Programmer Analyst
Pedro.Braz@fresno.gov

Business Council Contact:
Karol Ruiz Foster
Senior Public Affairs Manager
karol.ruiz@salesforce.com

SIEMENS CORPORATION: Revitalizing a City of Firsts: Modernizing Springfield's Infrastructure Without Compromise

Project Description: Since 2006, Siemens has partnered with the City of Springfield, Massachusetts to modernize aging infrastructure across 36 schools serving 23,000 students and dozens of municipal buildings through a performance-based public-private partnership.

With more than $104 million invested, the collaboration has upgraded HVAC systems, building automation controls, fire and life safety systems, and electrical infrastructure in schools, libraries, fire stations, and City Hall – all while preserving buildings dating to the 1890s.

Energy Savings Performance Contracts, federal ESSER funding, grants, and utility rebates finance improvements without referendums, overrides, or increased taxes. Savings are reinvested directly into classrooms and students.

Siemens' EMPOWER+ grant program equips middle schoolers with robotics and 3D printing labs and high schoolers with IT workforce skills, reflecting a partnership built around the city's long-term success, not a single transaction.

Challenge: Springfield is home to some of the oldest public buildings in the Commonwealth. Many schools were built in the 1890s and lacked modern HVAC, air quality systems, or air conditioning.

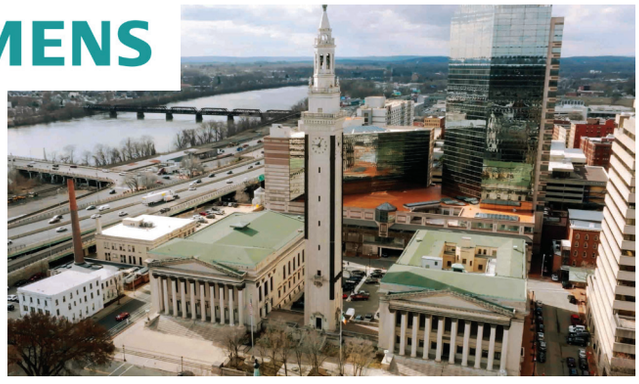
As Mayor Domenic Sarno recalls: "If it got too warm, you opened the windows. If it got too cold, you put on a jacket."

The city faced significant deferred maintenance, rising energy costs, and aging steam, electrical, and fire alarm systems across schools and municipal facilities. More than half of Springfield's students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, making fiscally responsible modernization critical.

Impact: Over two decades, the partnership has delivered compounding returns, not just in energy savings, but in student health, educational outcomes, and long-term fiscal stability.

- $1.6 million in annual utility savings and $2 million+ in rebates from utility providers, reinvested into classrooms and students
- 846,000 kWh saved annually – equivalent to 36,700+ gallons of gasoline not consumed
- 145% overachievement on initial energy savings goals
- 23+ schools modernized with HVAC, automation, and fire safety upgrades since 2022; 13 more in the works
- 4% decrease in student asthma rates following IAQ improvements
- The partnership contributed to improved conditions that support student success; Springfield has reported a 36% improvement in graduation rates over the course of its broader transformation efforts
- Zero tax increases to residents across the entire 20-year partnership

SIEMENS



How-to: Springfield's approach provides a replicable model for any city facing aging infrastructure and limited budgets:

1. Siemens conducted audits across schools and municipal facilities to identify deferred maintenance, energy waste, life-safety gaps, and internal air quality (IAQ) deficiencies.
2. Energy Savings Performance Contracts (ESPC) guarantee that project costs are repaid through verified energy savings, removing upfront capital barriers, and protecting taxpayers.
3. Springfield combined ESPCs with federal ESSER funds, state grants, and utility rebates to maximize scope without relying on a single funding stream.
4. Work proceeded by replacing steam systems, re-piping, reinforcing rooflines, sealing envelopes, and upgrading electrical systems, without disrupting daily operations or compromising historic character.
5. Siemens' EMPOWER+ grants funded STEM maker spaces, robotics kits, and an IT networking career pathway at Central High School.
6. Savings ($1.6M annually + $2M+ in rebates) were tracked and reinvested into classrooms.

General Tips: Nine phases over 20 years compounded results in ways a single procurement cycle never could have. As the city's facilities director put it: "Our challenges aren't going away, but neither is Siemens."

ESSER funding worked best as a one-time infrastructure investment. Springfield avoided the fiscal cliff other districts face by directing federal dollars into buildings, not recurring personnel costs.

Mayors respond to outcomes they can point to student health, graduation rates, energy savings, and no new taxes.

STEM labs and workforce programs turned a building upgrade into a community investment,and gave elected officials something to champion beyond spreadsheets.

Budget: More than $104 million invested across the 20-year partnership

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Federal Grants, Other

Additional Investment: Energy savings reinvestment, utility rebates, Siemens STEM education funding grants

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Business Benefits, Other:

Business Council Contact:
Brie Sachse
brie.sachse@siemens.com

STANTEC: Revitalizing an urban landmark with resilient design, enhanced accessibility, and a diverse, acclimated tree canopy

Project Description: 16th Street, formerly the 16th Street Mall, is a mile-long pedestrian and transit corridor connecting Union Station to Civic Center and the Colorado State Capitol. Since the early 1980s, it has served as the cultural and transportation spine of downtown Denver. The redevelopment emerged from a shared vision among the City and County of Denver, RTD, Downtown Denver Partnership, and a multidisciplinary consultant team to restore 16th Street as a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient public realm, honoring its historic identity while introducing renewed energy and activity. Delivering this vision required sustained collaboration across agencies, disciplines, and local delivery partners through a design-build process.

Building on community outreach and early design alternatives, Stantec played a key role in developing procurement and technical requirements to guide the design-build process, including pavement, lighting, and urban tree systems. Stantec also supported the 16th Street Mall Environmental Assessment process and led the procurement and long-term management of large-caliper trees, grown locally and monitored for several years prior to installation.

Challenge: 16th Street has been one of Denver's most iconic public spaces since 1982. This pedestrian and transit corridor anchors downtown as a transportation hub and the cultural destination. Decades of heavy use, growing safety concerns, aging infrastructure, and declining tree health created an urgent need for a redesign to restore the vibrancy of 16th Street as the heart of downtown Denver.

Delivering on that vision required serious commitment from the City and County of Denver, the community, and the design team. Working closely with project partners, we developed a regenerative urban design that prioritized climate resilience, public space, and green infrastructure. Our team provided public realm, landscape architecture, and technical expertise throughout the project, with a focus on improving accessibility, strengthening the urban tree canopy, and creating a more welcoming environment for all users.

Impact: In coordination with a multidisciplinary team, the project delivers a regenerated streetscape that prioritizes accessibility, climate resilience, and a healthy urban canopy. The new design introduces a curbless, fully accessible street with seamless paving throughout the corridor, while preserving the iconic diamondback pattern that defines 16th Street's historic identity. To support long-term tree health, the design incorporates a suspended pavement system that provides over 1,000 cubic feet (28 cubic meters) of uncompacted soil per tree and includes 220 new trees across 10 species. This aligns with Denver Forestry's goals for species diversification and resilient urban canopy. We also led the procurement of large-caliper trees in collaboration with Denver City Forestry and Environmental Design Inc. These trees were locally grown and nurtured for four years to acclimate them to Denver's climate prior to installation.

The renewed 16th Street offers significant environmental and social benefits, expanding shade, reducing heat, improving air quality, and creating a vibrant, inclusive gathering space for residents, workers, and visitors.

How-to: The procurement of 6-8" large caliper trees was a fundamental component of the project, supporting higher tree planting success in a highly urban context and extending the long-term longevity of the landscape. These trees were selected and grown at a local nursery for four years in above ground tree boxes, allowing them to mature and acclimate to Denver's climate prior to installation. Trees were delivered block by block as construction progressed in phases over a three-year period.

In addition to installing large caliper trees, the project significantly upgraded the planting infrastructure to support long term tree health. A continuous tree trench was integrated into the street section and filled with structural soil cells, providing each tree with generous uncompacted soil depth and horizontal space to support growth and maximize canopy. The tree grate system is also designed to adapt as trees mature.

The improved success of the trees and the immediate shade canopy provided at installation create a more livable streetscape that incorporates cafe seating and expanded public amenity space. Tree species were also diversified, increasing resilience to environmental stressors, pests, and disease. The resulting tree canopy delivers critical ecosystem services, including shade, cooling, and pollutant reduction, which are essential to the urban realm in the face of climate change and rising summer temperatures.

General Tips: The new expanded amenity zones create a buffer between the bus lanes and the walk zone and allow for flexible seating options, play features, and expansion of restaurant patio space.

The curbless design enhances continuity between amenity zones and enables flexible, free flowing event space when buses are diverted from 16th Street during festivals and special events.

Drainage is beautifully and discretely integrated through a continuous slot drain on either side of the transit way. At each block, the curb ramps up to provide accessible bus stops while also signaling to users that they are approaching an intersection.

The historic pavement pattern is replicated with a smaller, textured paver, enhancing maintainability while improving traction and safety in wet and snowy conditions.

Budget: The estimated final cost is $175.4 million

Funding Sources: Municipal Bonds, Federal Grants, State Grants, General Purpose City Funds, Other:

Tags: Innovation, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Business Benefits

City Contact:
Brian D. McLaren
PE Engineering Specialist City & County of Denver Department of Transportation & Infrastructure, Transportation Implementation
brian.mclaren@denvergov.org

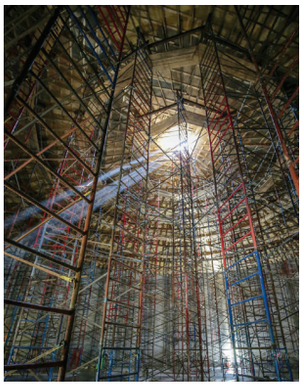
Business Council Contact:
Nancy Locke
PLA Stantec Discipline Leader, Landscape Architecture
nancy.locke@stantec.com

STV: Vista Ridge Regional Supply Project

Project Description: To strengthen long-term water resilience in one of the nation's fastest-growing metropolitan regions, the City of San Antonio advanced the Vista Ridge Regional Supply Project (VRRSP), a transformative public-private partnership (P3) that delivered a new, drought-resistant water source to Central Texas. At completion, the VRRSP became the largest P3 water project in North America, supplying over 16 billion gallons of potable water annually for at least 30 years. STV partnered closely with the Central Texas Regional Water Supply Corporation, the San Antonio Water System and regional stakeholders, providing comprehensive program management and engineering services across the full project lifecycle. This integrated approach enabled the delivery of a technically complex, multi jurisdictional system that balances constructability, environmental stewardship, regulatory coordination and long term operational reliability, while giving civic leaders a scalable, proven model for meeting future growth.

Challenge: San Antonio's sustained population growth and increasing climate variability placed mounting pressure on existing water supplies, elevating the need for diversification beyond traditional sources. City leaders required a solution that could be delivered at regional scale while protecting the Edwards Aquifer, maintaining affordability and supporting long term reliability for residents and businesses alike. The VRRSP also presented the inherent challenges of a P3 megaproject: the project includes 18 groundwater wells, treatment and pumping of 45-mgd potable water covering over 140 miles across seven counties; navigating multiple municipal, state and federal jurisdictions; securing more than 300 permits; and advancing design and construction while land acquisition was still underway. The delivery strategy carefully balanced risk, schedule certainty, constructability and public accountability while setting the foundation for decades of continuous, resilient service.

Impact: The VRRSP now delivers up to 20% of the region's water supply, strengthening long-term water security for more than two million residents in the San Antonio, Texas metropolitan area. By introducing a drought-resistant source, the project can support continued housing development, industrial investments and job growth while reducing reliance on stressed aquifers and enhancing environmental sustainability. The VRRSP established a national benchmark for large scale P3 water infrastructure, delivered under budget and within an accelerated timeframe. The project's delivery approach and outcomes earned national and statewide recognition, including the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) Engineering Excellence Award and designation as the state's overall Project of the Year. For city leaders, the VRRSP demonstrates how disciplined governance, strong public private partnerships and technical rigor can translate into durable infrastructure, public trust and long-term community resilience.



Interior construction at the Vista Ridge Regional Supply Project, where large-scale engineering and careful sequencing support reliable water service for future generations.

Vista Ridge Regional Supply Project infrastructure in Central Texas, supporting a new, drought-resistant water supply designed to serve the region reliably for decades.

How-to: The VRRSP was developed and implemented through a disciplined, phased approach that can be replicated by cities facing long term water supply and resilience challenges through several best practices.

Development: City leaders first identified the need to diversify water sources in response to rapid growth and climate variability. A public private partnership delivery model was selected to balance risk, accelerate delivery and protect public interests. Early in the process, the project team established clear program governance, technical standards and performance criteria to guide design, permitting and construction across multiple jurisdictions.

Implementation: With governance in place, STVadvanced concurrent design, permitting and land acquisition to maintain schedule certainty. Rigorous design standards, hydraulic modeling, surge protection and constructability reviews supported technical reliability and long-term resilience. Continuous program management coordinated agencies, landowners, regulators and contractors across seven counties, enabling more than 300 permits to be secured while construction progressed safely and efficiently.

Replication: Cities can replicate this best practice by aligning early on delivery strategy, governance and technical standards; investing in comprehensive program management; and maintaining transparent, cross jurisdictional coordination.

General Tips: Early and sustained leadership alignment is critical: clear direction from elected officials and utility leadership helped maintain momentum through changes in scope, schedule and market conditions.

Community and landowner engagement must begin well before construction; transparency and responsiveness were essential to maintaining trust across a large, multi-county footprint.

Flexibility in delivery sequencing proved invaluable, allowing design and construction to advance while accommodating permitting and acquisition realities.

Finally, documenting governance decisions and technical tradeoffs created continuity across a multi-year program and strengthened institutional knowledge.

These lessons reinforce that successful megaprojects benefit from early, objective advisory support: helping cities align governance, delivery strategy and technical decision-making before complexity compounds and flexibility narrows.

Funding Sources: Private Funding

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Environment Impact, Business Benefits

Business Council Contact:
Keith Benjamin
keith.benjamin@stvinc.com
(202) 753-5308

Summer: Keeping $1 Billion in New Yorkers' Pockets: A Citywide Student Loan Support Program

Project Description: New York City partnered with Summer to give every city resident and municipal employee free, expert help managing their student loans. Summer has delivered $2.1 billion in lifetime savings for more than 1 million individuals nationwide.

In its first year alone, the program delivered nearly $83 million in projected savings and cut payments by an average of $5,736 per borrower annually, generating an estimated $45 million in annual sales tax revenue for the City.

Challenge: Federal student loan programs can save borrowers hundreds of dollars a month or forgive their debt entirely. But the application process is notoriously complex, and a single documentation error can mean a rejected application, lost progress toward forgiveness, or years of unnecessary payments.

For New York City, that knowledge gap had become an affordability crisis. Student loan payments are crowding out essentials like rent and childcare, eroding household budgets, and pushing working families toward default.

The challenge was threefold: reach borrowers across every income level and neighborhood, simplify a federal system designed for experts, and catch the errors that routinely cause federal rejections. Doing this at the scale of New York City required a partner with existing infrastructure, outreach and policy expertise, and the ability to deliver personalized support to over a million residents.

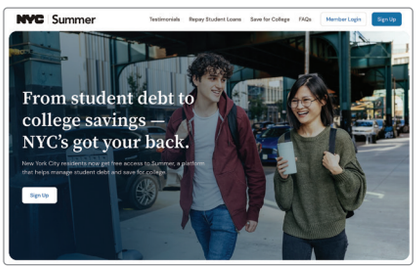
Impact: In its first year, the program delivered:

- $83 million in projected lifetime student loan savings
- 9,000+ borrowers supported with personalized guidance
- $478 average monthly payment reduction per borrower, an 11% bump in take-home pay
- 96% satisfaction rate among participants
- 20%+ of applications had substantive errors caught before submission, preventing rejections and payment spikes
- 500+ borrowers in default guided back into good standing before federal collections resume later in 2026

Participants span ages 20 to 60+ with an average income of $77,560.

A working mother earning $56,000 saw her $1,584 monthly payment drop to $0, with full forgiveness on track for 2027 through her public service work. A 15-year public servant learned she had been eligible for forgiveness since 2021. Summer certified her employment history, and within a week her servicer eliminated $250,000 in debt and refunded years of overpayments.

Every dollar saved on a federal loan payment is a dollar that stays in the local economy.



Landing page for NYC residents to access the Summer platform.

Samantha Adelson, a Bronx school director, just had $38,000 in student debt forgiven. "My husband and I hope to buy a home soon, and now we can put what was going to loan payments into savings," she said.

How-to: Before launching, NYC worked with Summer to estimate the number of borrowers in the city, total debt carried, and the share of municipal employees affected. This data built the case for the program.

The program is free for all NYC residents and municipal employees, with no income cap and no eligibility test. Summer operates as the service provider and the city handles awareness.

Rather than building a new standalone program, NYC integrated Summer into existing touchpoints: city agency HR teams, benefits fairs, employee onboarding, webinars, and partnerships with outside organizations. Summer also drove citywide outreach, which is often the weak point in resident benefit programs that rely on the city alone to promote them.

Summer's platform guides borrowers through applications for federal payment-reduction and forgiveness programs. For complex cases, borrowers book one-on-one sessions with Summer's student loan experts.

Every application Summer processes is reviewed for disqualifying errors before it reaches the federal servicer. This is the single biggest reason the program outperforms borrowers going it alone.

Summer reports on borrowers served, dollars saved, satisfaction rates, and at-risk residents identified. These metrics tie directly to economic development, affordability, and constituent services goals.

General Tips: Federal collections are expected to resume later in 2026, and wage garnishment will start hitting paychecks. Cities that move now can prevent defaults rather than clean up after them.

Federal student loan rules change constantly, and a single documentation error can cost a borrower years of progress. Use an existing partner with the policy expertise and infrastructure already in place. NYC launched in months, not years.

Existing city touchpoints (agency HR teams, benefits fairs, community organizations) outperform standalone campaigns and keep acquisition costs low.

Budget: Funding Sources: General Purpose City Funds

Tags: Innovation, Cost Savings, Impact on City Economy

City Contact:
Mike Viggiano
Chief of Staff of Human Capital, NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services
maviggiano@dcas.nyc.gov

Business Council Contact:
Rich Williams
Chief Customer Officer, Summer
rich.williams@meetsummer.com

U.S. Green Building Council: Global Leadership in Green Building

Project Description: The Port of Long Beach, in partnership with the City, private terminal operators, and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), has created a leading model for integrating sustainability into port operations through measurable standards and shared accountability. This work aligns with the City's broader climate and sustainability goals, ensuring coordination between municipal policy and port activities. Central to the approach is linking public policy, including the Green Port Policy, with private investment and frameworks like LEED.

The Port's LEED Gold–certified projects reflect a strong commitment to high-performance, low-impact design. These facilities incorporate energy efficiency, water conservation, and sustainable materials while enhancing workplace quality. By embedding LEED standards into capital planning and construction, the Port has made sustainability a consistent, measurable practice across its built environment.

Challenge: The project strengthened environmental management across port operations while addressing the longstanding challenge of balancing economic growth with stewardship at one of the world's busiest ports. Historically, ports have faced air pollution, resource-intensive infrastructure, and inefficient facilities. The Port of Long Beach addressed these issues by embedding sustainability in both facility design and daily operations.

Through LEED-certified buildings, the Port improved energy efficiency, water conservation, and indoor environmental quality. Integrating LEED standards into capital planning ensured consistent performance across new and existing assets while maintaining operational efficiency.

The partnership also improved transparency and alignment, ensuring sustainability goals are embedded in infrastructure and daily operations, not just policy.

Impact: The partnership has positioned the Port of Long Beach and the City as global leaders in sustainable port operations, delivering measurable environmental, economic, and community benefits. LEED Gold–certified facilities have reduced energy use, lowered costs, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and improved workplace conditions.

The Green Port Policy has driven measurable improvements in air quality, water resources, and habitat protection, significantly reducing emissions while supporting cargo growth. These efforts align with the Port's commitment to zero-emissions operations, advancing leadership in decarbonizing goods movement.

Beyond local impact, integrating LEED standards into capital planning and aligning policy, investment, and operations has created a replicable model for other ports and cities. Collectively, these efforts strengthen competitiveness, build community trust, and contribute to broader climate goals.

How-to:

1. The City and Port engaged USGBC and private partners to align sustainability goals and adopt recognized certification systems such as LEED.
2. Sustainability benchmarks were embedded into capital planning and project requirements.
3. Early LEED-certified facilities demonstrated feasibility and long-term value, building confidence among stakeholders and creating internal expertise.
4. The Port scaled these practices across additional facilities, integrating sustainability requirements into standard design, construction, and procurement processes.
5. The Port implemented data-driven systems to track building performance, including energy use, water consumption, and emissions, enabling informed decision-making and continuous improvement.
6. Lessons learned are shared across the port industry and with other cities, demonstrating a scalable model for integrating green building practices into complex infrastructure systems.

General Tips:

- Anchor initiatives in a clear policy framework
- Use third-party certifications (LEED) to ensure credibility and consistency.
- Align incentives between public agencies and private operators.
- Invest early in data systems to enable measurement and transparency.
- Prioritize workforce engagement and training to sustain operational changes

Budget: The Port's current 10-year plan allocates more than $3.2 billion toward infrastructure upgrades, with over $220 million dedicated specifically to zero-emissions initiatives.

Funding Sources: Private Funding, Federal Grants, State Grants, Other

Additional Investment: The Port of Long Beach's initiatives are supported by a layered financing approach. Projects leverage required matching funds that bring in additional Port and private partner resources.

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Innovation, Cost Savings, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Jobs Created, Business Benefits

LEED-Gold Port of Long Beach Port Administration Building

LEED-Gold Port of Long Beach Maintenance Facility

City Contact:
Renee Moilanen
Director of Environmental Planning, Port of Long Beach
(562) 283-7100
renee.moilanen@polb.com

Business Council Contact:
Hilari Varnadore
VP, State and Local Government,
U.S. Market Transformation & Development
(202) 379-8524 mobile
hvarnadore@usgbc.org

VEOLIA: Wastewater Treatment Performance Turnaround

Project Description: Sapulpa, Oklahoma, is a city of 23,000 people located at the southwest edge of the Tulsa metropolitan area. In May 2025, Veolia came in as the wastewater treatment operations and maintenance contractor, taking over a system that was in crisis. Previously, the City faced many compliance violations and fines from the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality. Veolia was hired to provide operation & maintenance (O&M) responsibility for the City's wastewater treatment systems, including 3.5 million gallons a day of average wastewater flow through the city's wastewater plant. The project also included management of 20 lift stations in the wastewater collection system across the city. With Veolia's expertise, scale, and resources in the region, they were able to turn the plant performance around within one year.

Challenge: The city had faced challenges with staffing the wastewater plant for several years. With retirements and departures, there was a deficit of experience, expertise and adequate staffing levels. The results were significant challenges to maintaining the facilities in a manner that would meet state compliance requirements. In addition to compliance standards, the poorly performing wastewater plant required greater spending on materials, chemicals, and outsourced repair services.

Impact: Leveraging our expertise and resources in the region, Veolia staff immediately performed a comprehensive assessment of the project's needs, repairing or replacing degraded equipment. Leadership also implemented new plans and procedures for maintenance supervision, and began to provide new training opportunities for project staff. Optimization of energy and chemical use immediately cut costs by 33 percent across several categories

Additional Investment: State loan from the Oklahoma Water Resources Board

Tags: Service Delivery Improvement, Cost Savings, Environment Impact, Impact on City Economy, Increased Tourism

City Contact:
Steve Hardt
Sapulpa Public Works Director
(918) 216-4352

Business Council Contact:
Annie Osborne
(978) 270-9503
annie.osborne@veolia.com

THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director

1620 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: 202.293.7330

Stay Connected

usmayors.org
@usmayors