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## Fair paths to EV charging

The infrastructure of motorization cleaved deep divides in the American landscape. As cities think about EV charging projects, they need to understand what kinds of infrastructure investments will create fairer outcomes. On Wednesday, January 11, the Tech and Innovation Center Series of the Local Infrastructure Hub hosted a webinar exploring how U.S. cities can leverage new sources of federal funding to deliver more equitable rollouts of vehicle charging infrastructure.

Three panelists shared their knowledge and insights on key aspects of this challenge:

- **Making sense of federal EV funding.** IIJA, IRA, NEVI... How can cities make sense of the alphabet soup of programs and agencies mobilizing funds for transportation electrification? Katherine Stainken, Vice-President of Policy for the Washington-based Electrification Coalition distilled the latest developments from inside the Beltway and [tips for successful proposals](#) for cities.
- **Deciding where to put public EV chargers.** What considerations should cities take into account when selecting neighborhoods and specific locations for public EV chargers? Erin Kayser, Electric Vehicle Program Coordinator for the City of St. Paul, Minnesota explained the factors used to plan the Twin Cities' pioneering [Evie Community Carshare](#) program, which paired 170 free-floating public electric vehicles with 70 charging stations. [TL, DR:](#) focus on low-income communities where car ownership lags and transit connections are sparse.
- **Building regional partnerships for equity in EV charging.** EV charging systems can't stop at city limits. Americans' daily travel takes them across municipal and county boundaries. Jordan Davis, Executive Director of Smart Columbus, explained how her organization is already on its second regional charging plan (the first was completed in 2018), and is expanding that process in partnership with a growing coalition of metro-area counties.

### Advice for cities

Panelists engaged with session participants, highlighting several key pieces of advice:

1. **Map "charging deserts" ASAP.** The arrival of a larger variety of more affordable EVs to the market, along with federal tax breaks included in the Inflation Reduction Act, cities are likely to see a big shift in where people use and park electric vehicles. Understanding



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where current charging networks don't reach will be key to steering federal funds where they are needed.

2. **Think big.** Smart Columbus' original goal was a five-fold increase in the number of charging stations. Achieving that goal provided the confidence to engage more counties in a larger regional collaboration. While cities need to deliver on promises, in the case of charging networks, bigger is better.
3. **Work with states.** Much of the federal funding for EV charging is directed at states. For instance, the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure program targets state-designated corridors. While cities will have direct access to unprecedented levels of discretionary funding through the [Charging and Fueling Infrastructure](#) program, coordination with states can be a powerful tool for achieving charging that serves everyone, everywhere.

## Links From the Discussion

"Federal Funding: Guidance for Cities" (Electrification Coalition)

<https://electrificationcoalition.org/work/federal-ev-policy/federal-funding-guidance-for-cities/>

Evie Carshare

<https://eviecarshare.com/>

"Smart Columbus: Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Playbook"

<https://smart.columbus.gov/projects/electric-vehicle-charging-infrastructure>

## About Tech and Innovation Center Series (T&IC)

The T&IC series is dedicated to helping local leaders navigate and understand the large quantities of information from the federal government on the nearly 400 funding opportunities available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The series is focused on how cities can leverage technology to improve their federal infrastructure funding proposals over the next 18 months. Programs will focus on helping cities improve their proposals in response to Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFO's) by adopting state-of-art technologies, expanding their technology capacity, and integrating aspirational technology "moonshots" for their cities.

The Series is produced by the Jacobs Urban Tech Hub at Cornell Tech and U.S. Digital Response (USDR) as part of the Local Infrastructure Hub, a partnership of the US Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, Results for America and Delivery Associates supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, Ballmer Group, Emerson Collective, Ford Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation.