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Innovative Solutions for Safe Streets

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A), a new program established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, will deliver more than \$5 billion in new federal funding for planning and implementation of strategies to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

Cities are eligible for two types of grants through SS4A. Action Plan grants support cities in developing or updating a comprehensive safety action plan. Implementation grants support cities to carry out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan. In FY2022, more than \$800m was awarded to local and regional governments to advance 473 Action Plan Grants and 37 Implementation Grants. For FY2023, more than \$1.2 billion is available.

On April 12, 2023 the Local Infrastructure Hub hosted a webinar through its Tech and Innovation Center Series to share success stories from two cities using SS4A funding to mobilize new technology and data sources for safer streets. We were joined by **Stephanie Shaw, Chief of Staff, Office of Street Improvement Programs at New York City's Department of Transportation**; and **Melissa Taylor, Director of Strategic Long Range Planning, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency/TPO** in Tennessee.

Both efforts build on past technology and innovation successes. Under the Bloomberg administration, New York City built nearly 400 miles of bike lanes, including the nation's first parking protected bike facilities, redesigned hundreds of streets and reclaimed 39 acres of car lanes for safe pedestrian space. The changes helped reduce traffic deaths to their lowest level in the city's history of record-keeping. Chattanooga's [MLK Smart Corridor](#) is a leading national testbed for traffic control and pedestrian safety technologies, collecting more than 2 billion data points every day from a network of sensors installed at 13 intersections on a 1.25 mile stretch of Martin Luther King Boulevard in the city's downtown.

Some of the highlights of the discussion included:

- **AI-powered cameras generate data to make the case for safe street interventions.** New York City is building a [citywide network of AI-powered video cameras to monitor streets and intersections](#) with funding from the Safe Streets and Roads for All program. These devices can distinguish nine distinct modes of transportation from pedestrians to cyclists to scooters to different types of motorized vehicles. The resulting data will inform new street designs—and also provide compelling visual evidence to build support among community leaders for additional safety interventions.



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- **Crash data visualization is a platform for starting conversations about safety across jurisdictions.** Chattanooga’s Crash Data Dashboard, published by the region’s metropolitan planning organization, provides a touchpoint for informing stakeholders and sparking conversations across jurisdictions. This resource helped lay the foundation for discussions that are now expanding a citywide Vision Zero campaign to a region-wide plan with funding from the federal SS4A program.
- **Before you buy: test tech out.** Cities have lots of choices for tech enhancements to safe street designs. But all urban tech is not the same, and cities need to test solutions. For instance, New York City tested several different vendors’ street-scanning cameras, and sussed that some were better than others at picking out pedestrians and cyclists. Talk to your peers in NACTO and other national organizations—their experiences and insights can help fast track your evaluation of vendor claims.

Links from the Conversation

- 2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All ([NOFO](#) and [FAQ](#)) — deadline on July 10, 2023
- U.S. DOT announced awards for [implementation grants](#) from the program’s initial round in FY2022.
- “NYC DOT to Test New Technology to Improve Street Safety by Better Measuring and Analyzing Transportation Uses on NYC Streets” — [press release](#): (April 12, 2023)
- Chattanooga’s MLK Smart Corridor — [video](#): WDEF News 12 report (August 3, 2021)

Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamp materials

With a mix of webinars, practical tools, and templates, the Grant Application Bootcamp materials are designed to provide an overview of the SS4A opportunity, guide you through the application process, and present actionable steps that can be taken to submit a strong application.

They include presentations from the SS4A (Implementation) Grant Bootcamp webinars with information on how to apply for federal funds and relevant tools and templates that can be applied to your grant application. The materials focus on how to build a community engagement plan, how to leverage community assets, how to effectively incorporate data into the grant application process, and how to construct a budget and a strong grant narrative.

SS4A Action Plan Grant Application Bootcamp materials

- <https://localinfrastructure.org/resources/safe-streets-and-roads-for-all-action-plan-guidance-and-tools/>

SS4A Implementation Grant Application Bootcamp materials

- <https://localinfrastructure.org/resources/safe-streets-and-roads-for-all-implementation-guidance-and-tools/>



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About the 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.