

# Five lessons learned from Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) grant winners

## Lesson #1

### Strengthen your application with regional or statewide coordination

Of the 47 [FY2022 and FY2023 CFI award winners](#), 20 were for statewide grants or regional collaborations and an additional 7 went to counties. We have explored the benefits of regional partnerships and other forms of state and local collaboration in [previous LIH resources](#), and they remain an effective strategy for expanding a project's potential impact and enhancing a competitive grant application.

## Lesson #2

### Prioritize charging in disadvantaged communities

Justice40, the environmental justice initiative for investing in and prioritizing disadvantaged communities that is being used to implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure law, is a central tenet of the Biden Investment Agenda. This priority was evident in both the CFI NOFO and awardees list.

At present, charging infrastructure is significantly more robust in wealthy areas, with [over 70 percent](#) of public EV charging ports located in the highest-income counties; in contrast, many low-income and disadvantaged communities remain "[charging deserts](#)" and do not have access to charging infrastructure. The majority of CFI awardees described their projects as promoting equity or serving low-income or disadvantaged locales, demonstrating how they would improve transportation access, support the clean energy transition, and reduce air pollution in these communities.

For cities looking for specific examples of how to incorporate equity into electric vehicle charging infrastructure, the Department of Transportation has provided [this resource](#) to help cities use equity data and a meaningful community engagement process to inform their planning.

## Lesson #3

### Develop a broader plan for charging infrastructure and demonstrate how your application fits within that plan

Expanding charging and alternative fueling for an eventual shift away from gasoline-powered vehicles is a huge nationwide undertaking and requires a major shift in our physical infrastructure. Cities will need to develop comprehensive short and long-term plans for how to implement these changes. Even if a grant application is only for a small portion of the overall plan, having a broader vision will strengthen the funding request.

Consulting with impacted communities and prioritizing their needs should be a component of any comprehensive charging infrastructure plan. Resources like this community engagement [workbook](#) designed specifically for the CFI program and this resource with [community engagement](#) tips for electric vehicle infrastructure can be helpful tools to ensure a meaningful and equitable community engagement process.

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## Lesson #4

### Remember that small and rural communities have an important role to play in the CFI landscape

Small and rural communities can be located at important points along transport corridors and, because their residents may be more reliant on personal vehicles to access basic needs and services, should be included in green energy transition along with their larger peers. Many of the recently announced CFI awards went to smaller communities and those outside of large metropolitan areas, for example; the Chilkoot Indian Association in Haines, Alaska; the County of Oneida in Central New York; and the City of Idaho Falls, Idaho.

For small and rural communities just getting started in their CFI journey, the U.S. Department of Transportation has created a [toolkit for rural EV infrastructure](#) that can be a helpful resource. This summary of [Boise, Idaho's winning application](#) is an example of how a small community developed a CFI application.

## Lesson #5

### Take advantage of additional LIH resources to develop a strong application

In the last round of CFI, bootcamp participants from Columbia, Missouri; Athens, Ohio; and Thousand Oaks, California were successful in obtaining funding. LIH has posted all of the materials from last year's [CFI bootcamp](#) online. While boot camps themselves are only open to communities of 150,000 or less, anyone can access the posted materials, which cover topics like how to use data to shape your narrative, community engagement strategies, and addressing federal administration priorities.

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**FY2024 NOFO not yet released**