

# Making Electric Vehicle Charging and Alternative Fueling the New Infrastructure Standard (CFI)

On February 13, 2024, the Local Infrastructure Hub hosted a session to discuss successful strategies for obtaining Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grants (CFI). CFI was created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to deploy publicly accessible electric vehicle charging and alternative fueling infrastructure in the places where people live and work. The session featured **Gabe Klein**, Executive Director of the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation; **Keith Benjamin**, Associate Administrator for Highway Policy and External Affairs, Federal Highway Administration; **Mayor Lauren McLean** of Boise, Idaho; **Mayor Andy Schor** of Lansing, Michigan; **Mayor Steve Patterson** of Athens, Ohio; and **Matt Stephens-Rich**, Director of Technical Services for the Electrification Coalition, to discuss what makes a competitive CFI application and how CFI funding fits within a city's broader climate plan.

## Key Insights Shared

### Take advantage of Joint Office resources.

Gabe Klein advised cities to use [Joint Office technical assistance resources](#) which are designed to help communities with their charging and fueling infrastructure deployment. The Joint Office provides one-on-one meetings to address questions, including about an unsuccessful application, and has a technical assistance support team to provide in-depth, hands-on analysis to help accelerate a city's successful deployment of zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure.

### Think of charging and fueling infrastructure from a wealth creation and workforce development perspective.

Keith Benjamin emphasized that applications should focus on equity benefits for disadvantaged communities. Charging and fueling infrastructure should be accessible to everyone in a community; therefore, a good application will show how EV Infrastructure projects increase mobility and reduce energy burdens while also creating jobs and supporting businesses.

### Engage folks who understand the grant writing process.

[Lansing, Michigan received \\$8 million](#) in federal funding to increase publicly available EV charging stations across the state's capital. Mayor Schor emphasized that Lansing's success comes from having a great team behind him. Mayor Schor's grant writing team engaged the community, neighboring municipalities, and Michigan State University for support. Mayors have the vision, but a successful application requires a mayor to work with the community and experts to translate that vision into a reality.

### Accessibility is key.

Boise's city operations will be carbon neutral by 2035 with the entire city being [carbon neutral](#) by 2050. Helping to make that vision a reality, DOT awarded [Boise \\$3.2 million](#) to implement public electric vehicle charging sites. Mayor McLean highlighted accessibility as key to their application's success as Boise's project focuses on underserved communities while creating an EV workforce development program.

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## Be collaborative in your approach.

Being in rural southeast Ohio, Mayor Patterson said that Athens did not necessarily have the resources and capacity to navigate the CFI application process and deliver on the city's ambitious goals. Therefore, Athens brought in the Southeast Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC) to bring together a coalition of 29 partners. Through its collaborative approach, [SOPEC secured a substantial \\$12,545,691 grant](#). This partnership ensured that Athens not only received a grant but would be able to follow through in bringing significant EV infrastructure to southeast Ohio.

Keith Benjamin also noted that states are in the midst of their planning process for the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program, and that collaboration with them is important so that their plans can incorporate input and feedback from local communities.

## Resources Shared During the Webinar and in Discussion

- [Mayor Patterson's Op-Ed](#)
- [Athens, Ohio Case Study](#)
- [Toolkit for Planning and Funding Urban Electric Mobility Infrastructure](#)
- [Toolkit for Planning and Funding Rural Electric Mobility Infrastructure](#)
- [CFI Q&A](#)
- [Joint Office Technical Assistance](#)
- [CFI Grant Recipients](#)
- [Electric Vehicle Working Group](#)

## Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamp Materials

The [Local Infrastructure Hub](#) is here to support cities in communicating the success of BIL-funded projects through a mix of webinars, practical tools, and templates. Our webinars and Grant Application Bootcamps can guide you through different application processes and actionable steps to submit a strong application.

Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamps are especially helpful for cities as they provide technical assistance for city staff on relevant tools and templates that can be applied to grant applications; how to build community engagement plans; how to leverage community assets; how to effectively incorporate data into the grant application process; and how to construct a strong budget and grant narrative. Register for our [bootcamps](#) now and receive expert assistance to construct your next federal grant application!