

# SMART Technologies for Transportation Accessibility

The Local Infrastructure Hub hosted a session on June 4, 2024, to discuss the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's (BIL) opportunities to create safer and more accessible streets through the use of innovative technologies. The Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) and Advanced Transportation Technology and Innovation (ATTAIN) programs focus on how advanced transportation technology can improve efficiency, safety, and connectivity. This webinar discussed the types of technologies and projects that these funds can be used for, as well as lessons learned from previous grant winners. Featured Speakers included **Stan Caldwell**, SMART Grants Program Director, U.S. Department of Transportation; **Jim Garling**, ATCMD/ATTAIN Senior Program Manager, Federal Highway Administration; **Mayor Brad Cavanagh** of Dubuque, Iowa; **Mayor Tom Arceneaux** of Shreveport, Louisiana; and **Joey Paskey**, Public Works Director of Las Vegas, Nevada to discuss best practices for submitting a winning application.

## Key Insights Shared:

### Show the viability of the project.

Applicants should prioritize purpose-driven technology that addresses specific real-world problems identified by the community. Cities should think of the problem first and how technology can address the issue, not the other way around. The SMART program values innovations that demonstrate safety, equity, efficiency, and sustainability impacts. It seeks proven technologies that have been deployed before but are not yet widely adopted. Stan Caldwell stated that successful applicants show the viability of the proposed idea and ensure that SMART grant activities result in some type of prototype or deployment. Furthermore, the proposal should discuss plans beyond the pilot project and also share a vision for stage two.

### Your project should reflect your city's broader goals.

Las Vegas was awarded a [\\$1.4 million SMART grant](#) to deploy AI-powered pedestrian detection systems. Joey Paskey discussed how the project will increase safety in downtown Las Vegas, where 26 million pedestrians frequent annually. The project uses sensor technologies and AI to monitor pedestrian and vehicle movements at signalized intersections, adapting signal timing to prioritize pedestrian safety. This initiative supports [Las Vegas' Vision Zero](#) goal. The initiative aims to understand pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle movements for future technology development while emphasizing the city's long-term vision to create a safer pedestrian city.

### Equity and community engagement are key to a successful application.

Shreveport, Louisiana won a [\\$995,400 SMART Grant](#) to develop AV and EV transit operations in partnership with labor and workforce development partners in anticipation of piloting autonomous, first-and-last-mile microtransit shuttle services. Mayor Arceneaux discussed how Shreveport prioritized equity considerations throughout every phase of the application. The project is supported by the technical college, and the transit union to gather diverse perspectives, particularly from public transit-dependent communities. The city has already implemented a no-fare system and when combined with microtransit, the project will enhance public transit utilization, and open up employment and educational opportunities.

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Consider the cascading benefits of the project.

Mayor Cavanagh discussed [Dubuque's \\$2 million SMART project](#) to utilize the 1,300 traffic cameras in the city to develop an AI program to route traffic in real-time. This program aims to move people, traffic, and goods more efficiently. However, it also has the added benefit of working to enhance [Dubuque's Climate Action and Resiliency Plan](#) by reducing emissions through shorter idling times for vehicles, and increasing resiliency through real-time information and emergency alerts to drivers.

## Resources Shared During the Webinar and in Discussion

- [FAST Act](#)
- [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Key Programs under the Federal Highway Administration Office of Operations](#)
- [Stage 1 SMART Grants NOFO](#)
- [4 Ways to Use New Transportation Technologies](#)
- [ATTAIN Fact Sheet](#)

## Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamp Materials

The [Local Infrastructure Hub](#) is here to support cities in accessing BIL funding and 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.

Register for our [Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamps](#) now to receive technical assistance for city staff on relevant tools and templates that can be applied to grant applications; learn how to build community engagement plans and leverage community assets; understand how to effectively incorporate data into the grant application process; and how to construct a strong budget and grant narrative.