Local Infrastructure Hub

RESULTS FOR AMERICA

Winning Project: Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Program

Boise, Idaho: Increasing Access to Electric Vehicle Charging in Boise, Idaho Through Infrastructure Deployment and Workforce Development

Awarded $3,200,000 • See Boise's Winning Application

Summary: Boise, Idaho received a $3.2 million grant to create public electric vehicle (EV) charging sites as well as a workforce development initiative to incorporate electric vehicle charging training into two local electrician apprenticeship programs. Boise's proposal includes strong stakeholder engagement as well as a demonstrated, data-based commitment to prioritize the needs of disadvantaged communities.

Key Application Features

The CFI grant is part of a broader plan for addressing climate change and reducing greenhouse gasses: In its application, Boise explained how a CFI grant would fit in with the city's Climate Action Roadmap, a plan to make Boise carbon neutral by 2050. In addition to identifying locations for and installing chargers, the application includes education and outreach components, workforce development initiatives, and a thorough planning process with a focus on equity.

A strong workforce development component: Boise plans to use CFI funds to collaborate with two local electrician apprenticeship programs to train electricians that can work with EV chargers and their associated infrastructure and the city made this portion of the grant a centerpiece of their application. The city stated in its application that it would look for private partnerships or collaborations to assist them in recruiting and retaining women, people of color, and others that are under-represented in the electrician profession, a valuable example for how to address an application requirement when local government may not have the capacity or expertise to fulfill it alone.

Stakeholder engagement is incorporated throughout the project lifecycle: Boise's application detailed how stakeholder and community engagement will begin with the prioritization, planning, and design phase of the project. Notably, the city included a line item in the budget for these activities. There is also a standalone section of the plan and budget that is dedicated to community education and outreach. The workforce development section of the application includes a community engagement component as well, further demonstrating Boise's commitment to embedding such engagement into all aspects of the project.

A thorough equity analysis: Boise used the EV Charging Justice40 map tool created by the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Energy, the DOT Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts Tool, and the city's own locally-developed tool—an environmental justice, equity and community health analysis referred to as the Clean City Index—to determine which census tracts and neighborhoods in the city were considered disadvantaged in order to prioritize those locations in its charging infrastructure planning and application.

Making the Case: In its application, Boise cited that the entire state of Idaho currently only has 127 EV charging ports and that downtown Boise has no direct current fast charging (DCFC) stations, which can be used for quick charging in heavily-trafficked areas. Using these data, the city proposed the creation of 100 new ports and 4-8 DCFC ports.

Boise made their case for a CFI grant by providing data from a variety of sources. The application included reports developed from the DOT Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts Tool and the AFLEET CFI Emissions Tool developed by Argonne National Laboratory (used to estimate greenhouse gas emission reduction). There was also a series of maps showing characteristics of the target area that would benefit from the grant, a frank and honest analysis of project readiness and risk mitigation, and an explanation of how they were meeting each of the grant scoring criteria.