

Become a Smart Community with US Ignite



Program Detail

Through its Smart Gigabit Communities (SGC) program, US Ignite offers local leaders the tools necessary for building smart community strategies, applications, RFPs, and sustainability plans -- all designed to help drive new services, startups, jobs, and innovation investments. The following is an overview of the local engagement activities US Ignite facilitates as cities move through four stages of smart city development:

STRATEGY AND PLANNING SUPPORT

Under US Ignite guidance, each community will form broad-based steering groups with representatives from anchor institutions (university and higher education institutions, hospitals, libraries), municipalities, industry, and startup and entrepreneurial communities. This group will establish goals informed by its residents and design the foundation of a multi-year strategy to build a smart community. US Ignite will also support each community by identifying national resources to fund and support the development of each community's efforts. Deliverables from this stage include the following:

1. STEERING GROUP

To create a community-wide engagement with broad-based, senior leadership and other key stakeholders, communities will assemble advisory and working groups that will expand viewpoints and operational support. In addition, US Ignite will provide coaching and facilitation assistance in navigating and launching the new partner networks.

Tools (provided by US Ignite or produced by partner):

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Steering Committee Guide, Community Asset Map Guide, Steering Committee and Working Group Charter, Roles and Responsibilities, and sample meeting agendas
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** Community Asset Map, contact lists, Steering Committee invitation list, and kickoff meeting agenda

2. SMART CITY STRATEGIC PLAN

To hold group members accountable, communities will establish a charter applicable to all stakeholders that details their roles and responsibilities for the smart community vision, strategic plan, and work plan. With a multi-year agreement, US Ignite will facilitate the creation of an individualized, multi-year, smart community plan.

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Community Charter, Smart Community Plan, community feedback solicitation guides
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** Locally driven Smart Community Plan with Project Timelines, regional priorities and needs set.

BUILDING THE SMART COMMUNITY PILLARS

With US Ignite support, each community will choose to build or partner to meet the smart community vision. An organized and deliberate approach to these pillars -- innovation ecosystem, service creation, economic development, and infrastructure -- will be helpful to ensure local goals and objectives are attained.

3. INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM/SERVICE & APPLICATION CREATION

To accelerate the adoption of smart city applications through the creation of a regular flow of development opportunities, communities need to create and sustain a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem. To prove the value of investment and provide transformational benefit, communities will actively steward and guide developers toward applications and services that meet key community needs and have demonstrable community impact.

Tools:

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Playbooks and detailed guides for solicitation, judging, and procurement of next-generation applications, and identification of innovation partnerships, streams of local, regional and national funding to support entrepreneurs that develop solutions to meet the community's needs and help scale and/or commercialize these applications. Access to all existing SGC applications from across the country appropriate for the community.
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** Hackathons, reverse pitches, and incubators that engage and excite a wide base of community voices and draw energy from engaged developers, capable mentors and local leaders supporting next-gen applications/projects

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To support new businesses ready for growth with accelerators and incubators and build on the advancements from the innovation ecosystem, communities will enhance and train teams of developers and support local business with mentorship and coaching. US Ignite draws from extensive experience within the Kauffman FastTrac program — a course designed to provide training, mentoring, and fund-raising tools to help entrepreneurs succeed.

Tools:

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Kauffman FasTrac entrepreneurial training, mentoring, fundraising guidance, and introduction to potential funding sources.
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** Small businesses with entrepreneurs and developers prepared to enter a competitive environment seeking funding to lead a successful business

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

To leverage fiber, wireless, and sensor networks to support applications, municipalities will work closely with technology infrastructure and deployment partners, supported by the following tools:

Tools:

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Pilot Guides, connection to mentors with proven experience in this stage, agreements for public-private partnerships, connections between municipalities and local technology infrastructure sector partners.
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** Anchor institution network map and business network challenges defined, agreements for participants with in-kind equipment to anchor network and secure a fully operational pilot/testbed network.

SCALING UP THE SMART COMMUNITY

To scale the smart community plan into a complete smart community deployment, significant resources and planning will be required. US Ignite will provide guidance based on projects that have proven track records to lead municipalities and their stakeholders to successful, large-scale launch.

6. PROCUREMENT

Communities need to produce coherent, actionable solicitations for large-scale smart city deployment. To develop purchasing and procurement documents necessary to work with outside partners based on factors beyond low-bid selection, existing policies and procedures may need to be updated to ensure partners have a clear understanding of the requirements of a successful application.

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Sample RFP documents, policy and procedure manuals, playbooks to create procurement consortia, identification of streams of local, regional and national funding to support resource deployment.
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** High-quality RFPs that reach the correct vendors, provide clear and concise requirements, and result in successful partnerships.

7. EVALUATION PLAN

To evaluate the program and its impact, communities will need to utilize a smart community program evaluation framework created and tested to gather quantitative and qualitative data that answer key evaluation questions, identify what data should be collected, and how data will be analyzed and reported.

Tools:

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Evaluation plan templates
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** Complete evaluation plans

EXTENDING THE OPPORTUNITY

A successful smart community program will find a way to use resources in a way that prevents their depletion over the long term so that it can continue to fulfill its mission. US Ignite will facilitate discussions and the drafting of a plan that includes the concepts of financial viability and sustainability, as well as leadership succession planning, adaptability, and strategic planning.

8. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

To make a successful transition from pilots and testbeds to full community-wide deployment, each community will need a plan to ensure that these new smart city services will be in place for long enough to meet community needs. Using a pre-developed architecture and template, US Ignite will ensure that communities understand and clearly communicate the resource needs, benefits to the community, and call to action.

Tools:

- **US IGNITE RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:** Sustainability plan templates and examples
- **PARTNER MILESTONES:** Sustainability plans