

# Systems Change in Phoenix

In 2015, communities across the greater Phoenix area faced important challenges in population growth, water shortages, and budget shortfalls. However, leaders also saw opportunities to collaborate on projects for optimization of roads for autonomous vehicle pilots and improvement of city services in line with citizen expectations. With community assets that included major universities, engaged local and county governments, and a wealth of technology-driven companies, innovators, and entrepreneurs, Phoenix needed a plan to create and accelerate its development as a smart region. The city sought a new collaboration partner that would drive technology-enhanced, regional economic development.

## The Initiative

US Ignite partnered with municipal, corporate, and higher education partners across Phoenix to identify and empower a local organization that would deliver a new community model through the following steps:

- **Partner Identification:** US Ignite worked closely with the city of Phoenix to define the requirements for a local innovation partner, selected the Institute for Digital Progress (AZiDP) as a new partner through a competitive proposal process, and supported the organization in becoming a catalyst for adopting smart community solutions.
- **Community-Wide Engagement:** US Ignite partnered with local leaders to establish a steering group that included local government CIOs, mayors, university researchers, and leading technology companies. This group aligned behind key goals and drove commitment to smart city initiatives including the Smart City Hack, Smart Workforce Development, and Urban iLabs.
- **Community Network Infrastructure Enhancement:** Partnership with Cox Communications ensured the deployment of gigabit infrastructure and smart city solutions at local innovation hubs.
- **Innovation Ecosystem:** While partners fostered the development of new applications and services to drive innovation and startups, US Ignite facilitated the sharing of previously developed applications and services from the other US Ignite Smart Gigabit Communities (SGCs) and led panel discussions at local events.

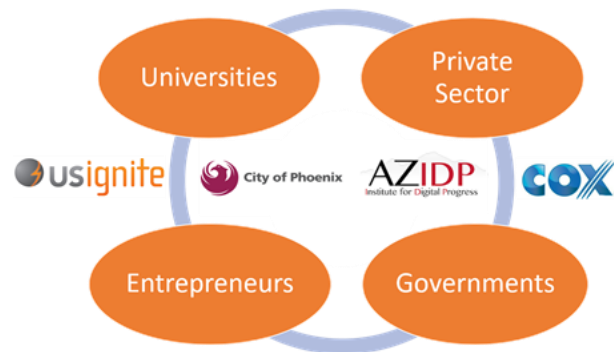


“US Ignite and the SGC program played a pivotal role in catalyzing the Greater Phoenix regional ecosystem, providing necessary thought leadership to ensure that what makes us “smart” is not a single project, but rather a continual process of utilizing technology to improve government efficiency, enhance individual well-being and solve complex problems. - Dom Papa, Executive Director, AZiDP.

## The Results

As a result of this US Ignite intervention with strong support from Cox Communications, AZiDP spearheads one of the first Smart Region consortia; a public-private innovation partnership forming a web of interconnected cities, tech companies, large universities, startups, innovators, and citizens. The actions of this consortium have produced the following results:

- **Innovation Ecosystem/Job Creation:** Leveraging hackathons, partners in Phoenix have empowered innovators and developers to create products and applications to tackle waste management, decrease vehicle congestion, expand the use of voice-activated assistants, and support the sharing economy).
- **Model Practices:** Leveraging insights from US Ignite's Smart City Playbooks, AZiDP developed a smart community plan and that has expanded to surrounding cities and towns.



## The Outcome

Since 2015, municipal, corporate, and innovation partners across Phoenix have delivered the following:

- **Funding Support:** Local agencies secured a \$6 million DOT grant to address congestion management.
- **Regional Expansion:** Locally, Phoenix's smart city effort has expanded to include 22 regional communities with an emphasis on transportation, collaboration, and the development of advanced applications and services that work across jurisdictional boundaries to benefit residents and visitors of all 22 regional communities.
- **University Engagement:** AZiDP established a mutually beneficial collaborative partnership with Arizona State University, leading to the establishment of the Center for Smart Cities and Regions (CenSCR) and enhancement of city and university infrastructure.

## Related links

- [Phoenix Smart City Hack](#) (2017 Event)
- [Greater Phoenix Smart Region Initiative Unifies Stakeholders To Create Digital Roadmap](#)
- [GovTech: Phoenix Partnership Promises to Further Regional Smart Cities Work](#)
- [Smart Cities Dive: Greater Phoenix Smart Region promises collaboration, workforce development](#)

## Select Partners

- [Cox Business](#)
- [AZiDP](#)
- [Arizona State University](#)

## About US Ignite

Launched in 2012, US Ignite is a national nonprofit that spurs the creation of next-generation applications and services that leverage advanced networking technologies. Working with smart communities across the globe, US Ignite accelerates smart city projects and applications, innovation, and economic development in local and regional ecosystems. US Ignite provides technical assistance for smart city pilot programs along with full-scale smart city and interconnected national deployments.