
American Cities Climate Challenge

The American Cities Climate Challenge is an initiative to accelerate climate action in 25 of America's largest cities. The Climate Challenge provides support and expertise to help participating cities realize their aggressive climate goals in core policy areas, including transportation.

Climate Challenge cities are leading the movement towards sustainable transportation. With plans to implement high-quality bike and transit corridors, redistribute space on their streets, and strengthen the capacity to continue this work into the future, participating cities are at the cutting edge of transportation solutions in America.

The model established in the Climate Challenge sets a precedent for cities across the U.S. By focusing on a small set of cities poised to implement transformational projects, North America will have high-quality, clearly successful, and replicable examples to point to for further progress in more communities nationwide.

NACTO's Role in the Climate Challenge

As a partner in the Climate Challenge, NACTO will provide technical assistance and expertise to cities developing high-quality bike and transit lanes. This will result in improved infrastructure that prioritizes low-carbon transportation and also sets a precedent for future projects: It helps cities establish a new status quo on their streets by designing them for people instead of personal vehicles.

NACTO will work in-depth with five cities of the 25 participating cities to accelerate the implementation of dedicated bike and bus corridors. Based on NACTO's City Accelerator model, this work will help cities rapidly build out infrastructure for sustainable and efficient transportation modes, while also identifying and strengthening internal pathways for future projects.

In eight additional cities, NACTO will host hands-on designing trainings that build off NACTO's peer-reviewed Street Design Guides. During these events, leaders will convene in a city for intensive and highly-tailored trainings that apply principles from Design Guides to direct treatments in the host city. These trainings allow host cities and visiting practitioners to exchange insights and best practices across the peer network in a real-world setting.

All 25 Climate Challenge cities will be able to exchange knowledge across NACTO's peer network, made up of over 80 North American Cities and transit agencies. This includes the opportunity to request Design Charrettes, a digital exercise that taps into the technical expertise and practical experience of the peer network to help cities design targeted improvements to their streets.

Each Climate Challenge city will focus on different projects and tap into NACTO's resources in different manners, but will leave with the same core results: More clearly defined internal pathways and refined technical expertise to implement street redesign projects.

NACTO Accelerator Program

NACTO's City Accelerator program helps cities rapidly implement high-quality transit or bike corridors, from design to build out. The program was started in 2014 as a way to provide in-depth, on-the-ground support to member cities implementing new street design projects that may depart from existing practice.

Whether a red bus lane or protected bike lane, undertaking new projects requires changing business as usual. Under Accelerators, NACTO helps cities develop the new partnerships and pathways needed to implement these projects, bringing together the rich peer network to help cities move projects from idea to implementation through lasting programmatic change.

Since 2014, five cities have completed Accelerators: four have completed Transit Program Accelerators--Cambridge, Denver, Indianapolis, and Oakland--and one is currently working with NACTO on a Bike Program Accelerator: San José, CA. All Accelerator cities have completed the program with projects on the ground.