

Simply the Best: The SCC Smart20

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By Chelsea Collier

For the past seven years, Smart Cities Connect (SCC) has awarded 50 top projects to showcase and celebrate the work being done in communities around the world. In 2024, we will change it up and launch the **Smart 20**, choosing the top 20 award winners that span all aspects of municipal communities, including but not limited to: urban operations and digital transformation, public policy, community engagement, funding, inclusion, governance, data, AI, sensors, Internet of Things, cyber security, privacy, blockchain, mobility including public transportation, autonomous transit, rideshare, networks, 5G, utilities, energy, grid, lighting, water and wastewater, public safety, emergency response, and sustainability.

The move to the Smart20 reflects how smart city projects have matured as sectors learn how to work together for the benefit of the communities they serve. It is an inspiring tradition to highlight the most innovative and influential smart municipal and regional-scale projects in the world. One of the prerequisites for even being able to submit an entry for the Smart 20 Awards is demonstrated collaboration across sectors. Over the years, there have been so many great examples of cities, utilities, universities, industry, startups, community advocates all working together to produce tangible, measurable outcomes.

Communities submit projects that illustrate how they are thoughtfully designing and deploying smart technologies to address their city's challenges. Award winners can span from full-scale infrastructure deployments to innovative pilot projects. While no two projects are alike, they are all focused on using data in meaningful ways to make a positive impact in their communities. SCC holds true to the mantra that smart cities put people first, and this criteria manifests in the project's commitment to improve city service delivery and residents' quality of life.

SCC hosts an Awards Reception at each Spring Conference and Expo to gather smart city leaders for connection and camaraderie and to raise a glass to recognize the winners. In 2023, we celebrated in Denver and added a new twist to the awards by recognizing three Overall Award Recipients that represent the highest echelon of smart city achievement. The 2023 Award Winners included:

Coral Gables, Florida, U.S. – Coral Gables Smart City Digital Twin Horizontal Integration Platform

Submitted by the City of Coral Gables Innovation and Technology Department,

“Homegrown CDT platform developed in house by existing CGIT staff and using existing technology services and infrastructure, there was no additional cost for the City.”

Kitchner, Ontario, Canada – Growing Together

Submitted by the City of Kitchener (Digital Kitchener Innovation Lab and Planning Division)

“Creates tools and a methodology to combine community input with data-driven analysis in a genuinely meaningful way. It allows us to better communicate complex issues with the public, so that they may provide more sophisticated feedback, and it allows us to link that feedback directly to a number of quantitative analysis tools for immediate and detailed evaluation of scenarios.”

Dallas, Texas – Red Cloud Neighborhood Smart Cities Pilot Project

Submitted by the City of Dallas Department of Public Works

“The first smart community in which all streets, alleys, and sidewalks were reconstructed with new light emitting diode (LED) streetlights installed, WAPs installed on each of the new streetlights to provide community Wi-Fi to the neighborhood”

So who will be the 2024 Award Winners that we recognize at the Spring Smart Cities Connect Conference and Expo in Raleigh? Is it YOUR community? Check out our quick and easy entry form and [submit your application today!](#)



SMART 20 AWARDS

Honoring the twenty most transformative smart projects each year

The Smart 20 Awards annually recognize global smart cities projects, honoring the most innovative and influential work. We will designate three winners from the overall awardee pool at the awards reception.

Who Should Apply	Awardees Receive	Awards Reception
<p>Strong applicants will represent innovative projects with current or future municipal-scale impact and application. Applications should clarify their connection with a municipal or municipal-similar partner, such as a county, region, campus, military base, or facility complex.</p> <p>A fee of \$395 is due for each application submitted, invoiced via email. We must receive payment on time in order to qualify your entry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ one (1) full registration waiver to Smart Cities Connect Conference and Expo, ✓ a shiny trophy. 	<p>Meet awardees, top solution providers, and municipal leadership from around the globe at the Smart 20 Awards Reception. Enjoy an open bar, appetizers, and networking. Three winners - out of the top 20 awardees - will be announced!</p> <p>When: March 10, 2026 Where: TBD Dress: Business Casual</p>

[Apply Now](#)

AWARDS TIMELINE



Questions, please contact Laura Murphree, laura@techconnect.org.

2025 AWARD RECIPIENTS

- **Winner** A Multi-Modal Cyber Traffic Infrastructure for Sustainable Mobility (Richardson, TX)
- Aurora's Digital Twin (Aurora, Canada)
- Central Texas Construction Partnership Program (Central Texas)
- Chatham Connect: Chatham Area Transit Electric Vehicle Micro Transit Project (Savannah, GA)
- City of Brownsville: Pioneering a Scalable and Citizen-Centric Smart City Vision (Brownsville, TX)
- City of Sarasota Smart City Initiative (Sarasota, FL)
- Cooling Our City: An Equitable Guide to Tree Planting (Kitchener, Canada)
- Genius 5.0 Smart City and Waste Management (Florence, Italy)
- GeoEngage Community Catalyst Initiative (Seguin, TX)
- Ghost Intersection Uses Real-World Data to Improve Driver and VRU Safety (Peachtree Corners, GA)
- Hilliard City Lab (Hilliard, OH)

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- Homeless Outreach (Fort Lauderdale, FL)
- Integrated Real Time AI Traffic Signal Control Revolution (Taoyuan City, Taiwan)
- Limestone County Water and Sewer Authority Smart Utility Project (Limestone County, AL)
- **Winner** Link US West Broad BRT Public Engagement Process (Columbus, OH)
- New Taipei Smart Poles: Building a New Paradigm for Future Cities (New Taipei City, Taiwan)
- **Winner** San Antonio Smart City and Streetlight Operations Systems (San Antonio, TX)
- The Cleveland Metroparks: Leveraging IoT and LoRaWAN for Smart Environmental Management and Data Collection (Cleveland, OH)
- Thomasville Heights: Building Strategies for Energy Efficient Retrofits (Atlanta, GA)
- ZeroEyes AI Detection (Las Vegas, NV)

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