



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the C² Challenge and why should I participate?

The Colorado Smart Cities Alliance (CSCA) runs the C² Challenge annually to encourage innovators to submit actionable solutions to specific issues faced by our participating communities. The C² Challenge enables Colorado communities to leverage a collaborative approach to explore, vet, and implement regionally applicable solutions through this outcome-driven process.

The C² Challenge is a unique opportunity for companies and researchers to test and prove solutions in an array of real-world environments including cities, counties, and Metro Districts. Proposers receive exposure to multiple potential partners at one time, opening the door to possibilities for replication and scaling across the state. The Alliance commits to providing feedback to proposers on the solutions whether the solution is selected for the C² Challenge or not.

2. What are the specific problems the C² Challenge is seeking to address?

Early Indicators of Housing Instability | How might communities detect early indicators of housing instability to enable proactive intervention before a resident experiences homelessness?

AI Agents – Use and Governance | How do we better understand, manage, and secure use of AI agents within government organizations while encouraging their responsible use?

Efficient Business Licensing & Permitting | How might local governments streamline the business licensing and permitting process across municipal, county, and state requirements into a single, accessible experience?



3. How were the Challenge statements selected?

The Challenge statements are developed first through surveying paying government members in our network. The Alliance then summarizes the most popular themes, and the same governments vote on the statements that they would like to see prioritized. The most popular themes are selected based on the vote.

4. What governments are participating in 2026?

The following jurisdictions have either confirmed or expressed interest in participating: **City of Colorado Springs, Jefferson County, City of Centennial, City of Castle Pines, City of Lakewood, and Arapahoe Libraries.**

5. What is the C² Challenge process timeline?

The full timeline is included in the graphic below, but key dates for solution providers are:

April 27th - Solution Provider application opens

May 13th at 9am MT - Informational Webinar for Solution Providers



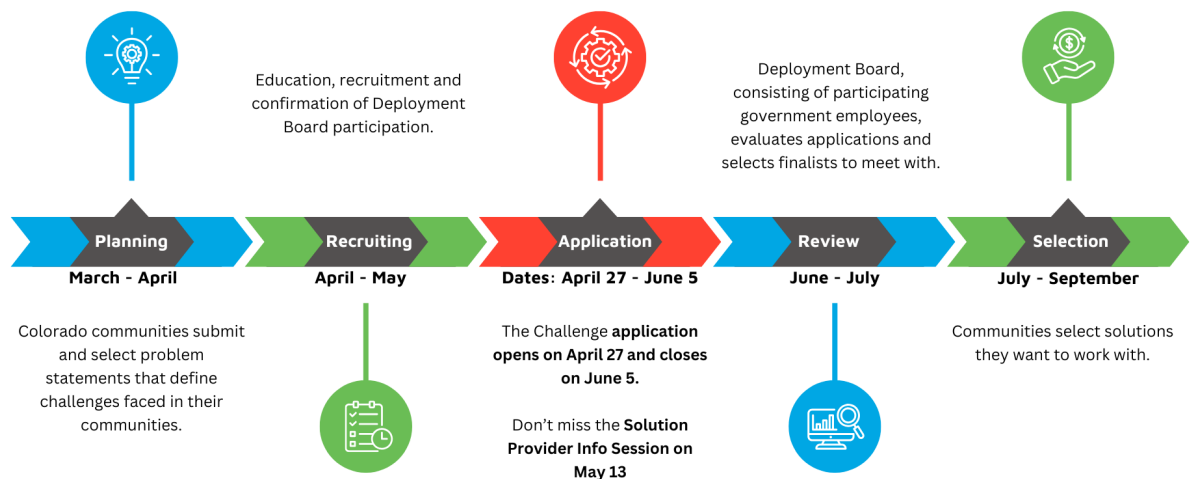
June 5th - application closes

July - Finalists are announced and interviews occur

August/September - Winners are decided and announced

2026 Connected Colorado (C²) Challenge Timeline

Key Dates



6. How are solutions evaluated?

Solutions will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Problem Definition - how well the problem is understood and specified
- Solution - how likely is the solution to improve the problem?
- Outcome - how will you measure success?
- Risk - what risks or dependencies does your solution present?
- Resources - what resources are required to implement the solution
- Team Qualifications - quality of the team's experience
- Proposal Quality - overall effort put into the proposal

The application form is designed to collect information that addresses each of these criteria.



7. Who evaluates the solutions?

Solutions are evaluated by the Deployment Review Board, which is composed of participating government employees representing each problem statement.

8. Is there funding available through the C² Challenge?

If your proposal requests funding and you are selected by a jurisdiction, they are responsible for funding the proposal directly. Funding timelines will differ depending on which jurisdiction selects you, and negotiation of scope and budget will happen directly between you and the jurisdiction itself. Submissions should request no more than \$25,000 for implementation, and any costs associated with the submission should be detailed in the submission.

9. What is the difference between a “finalist” and a “winner”?

Finalists are applicants whose proposals show enough potential to warrant an interview with representatives from interested participating governments. Winners are then chosen after an interview, and they will begin planning solution implementation with the jurisdiction/s that selected them. There is no specific number of finalists or winners - it is completely dependent on the interest of the Deployment Review Board.

10. If my solution is selected, is there a firm deployment timeline or minimum deployment period?

No - these are details that will be worked out between you and the interested jurisdiction(s) (with assistance from the Alliance as needed) on an ad-hoc basis depending on the project specifics.

11. Are there a predetermined number of winners?

There is not a predetermined number of finalists or winners.



12. Who is the Colorado Smart Cities Alliance?

The Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating partnerships that develop and prove next-generation solutions to the challenges shared across Colorado communities.

13. Do I need to be a member of the Alliance to submit a solution?

No, anyone is welcome to submit a proposal.

14. My solution addresses multiple problem statements. Can I submit for more than one problem statement?

Yes! This is great - we encourage all Solution Providers to look at how many of the problem statements their solution addresses. Please submit a proposal for each problem statement, but be sure to customize each application to ensure you're explaining how your solution addresses the problem statements you have chosen.

15. Should the solution be tailored to a particular problem or city?

The problem statements are purposefully broad to allow for many different solution types, as well as many different jurisdictions to participate. Solution providers should specify the particular part of the broader problem statement they are trying to address. Be clear about what specific problem you want to solve, and it is up to the Deployment Review Board to determine whether that problem is relevant to individual jurisdictions. You'll have a chance to express your understanding of the problem and how it manifests itself in Colorado in the Challenge Overview section of the application.

16. Can visuals be included in submission?

Yes - there are multiple questions in the application where it is possible to attach files as part of your response. You can also include links to multi-media assets where appropriate.



17. Is there any way for proposers to connect with each other to explore partnership opportunities or better solutions?

Not formally, however, if you let the Alliance know what you're seeking in a partnership and what you could bring to one, we're happy to make any resulting connections.

18. Do you have information about the foundational infrastructure in each city that the solutions would have to work within?

Not at this time; this level of detail would likely be uncovered with participating jurisdictions at the finalist and/or winner stages were the solution to advance in the Challenge process. For example, a specific software or hardware component may be needed for a jurisdiction to implement your solution - please specify that in your application, but we cannot provide that information up front, considering the diversity among the many jurisdictions that participate.

19. Who should I reach out to if I have questions?

Please direct any questions to Chelsea Barrett at chelsea@coloradosmart.city

20. What does it mean that a jurisdiction 'has done due diligence for engagement'?

The expectation that we have set for our jurisdictions to participate is that they bring all the stakeholders that are needed to review the solution, identify funds, and seek approvals, so if they select a solution as a winner they are confident that they can move forward with implementation.

21. Will the submission retain all IP, regardless of being accepted or not?

Solution Providers shall retain intellectual property rights to the information contained in the submission to the extent that such rights exist and are protected by law, though they may become subject to public records requests.



Solution Providers can protect sensitive information by marking it as “confidential”, “proprietary”, or “trade secret”, and will be notified if such a request is made. Providers who are not selected retain their intellectual property rights, and those who do advance will sign a contract with terms specific to their jurisdiction and solution type: IT solutions allow providers to retain IP rights while granting the jurisdiction government purpose rights and software licenses, while IP for non-IT solutions is negotiated between the parties.

22. What if the solution is selected by more than one jurisdiction?

If you are selected by more than one jurisdiction, you would have the opportunity to work with multiple and receive funding for each successful deployment (i.e. 2 projects x \$25k = \$50k).

23. Does the \$25,000 include the company’s fees only or should we include expenses that jurisdiction might incur to install hardware or equipment related to the complete solution? I.e. a surveillance camera

It should include all of the costs that a jurisdiction might incur. In some cases, companies will absorb some of those costs and you are welcome to put that in the full budget by outlining what you expect the jurisdiction to cover versus what costs you will pick up. Any costs that you expect the jurisdiction to be responsible for need to be included under the \$25,000.

Please note: *The Colorado Smart Cities Alliance requires that 5% of any revenue included in any contract awarded to a solution provider as a result of this RFI2 be remitted to the Colorado Smart Cities Alliance within 90 days of contract initiation. Any future revenue awarded for the solution submitted through this Challenge under this contract, or future contracts, including the expansion of the awarded solution beyond the initial \$25,000 scope of this RFI2, shall also be included under this provision.*

24. Is there a wireless infrastructure in place to use as a test bed for various application solutions?



You can't depend on one. Each jurisdiction is different. They may or may not have a public network that you can access. We recommend you specify if your solution needs connectivity and include costs that may be required if they do not have the connectivity you require.

25. Does the solution require a commercially viable product and what is the length of time that a solution can be tested?

No, it does not need to be commercially viable, but you should be clear at what stage of maturity your solution will be at the time of deployment. The length of time that a solution can be tested is up to you to propose and the jurisdiction to decide with you.

26. Have you had cases in the past of participants submitting multiple jurisdiction-specific solutions? Or are submissions suitable for all/most jurisdictions?

Ideally your solution is relevant to most or all of the jurisdictions. If you know there is one jurisdiction in particular you think this could work well for, you're welcome to mention them in the proposal.

27. Could a winning solution win again?

Yes - use this year as a replication opportunity.

28. Have the confirmed public sector participants shared specifics about their problems that they want to solve? If so, can you share those specifics?

Each jurisdiction has unique issues that won't be detailed during this initial phase. Because we have so many different jurisdictions with unique infrastructure challenges and requirements, the goal is to have applications that can apply, generally, to many representations of the broad challenge statement, and the jurisdictions can then select which ones are relevant to them. If you're selected for further review, we would invite you in for an



interview, which will begin a dialogue to co-develop the right application of your solution for their jurisdiction based on their specific need.

Addendum

29. Are international companies able to participate?

Yes - we encourage companies to apply from anywhere in the world, but applications must be submitted in English and the company must be legally able to perform work in the State of Colorado

30. Do you have an example location where your team would want to deploy a solution?

Each jurisdiction has unique issues that won't be detailed during this initial phase. Because we have so many different jurisdictions with varied challenges and requirements, the goal is to have applications that can apply generally to many different systems and the jurisdictions can then select which ones are relevant to them. Then they would invite you in for an interview if you're selected, and the jurisdiction may have an idea of where or how the solution could be deployed. This would begin a dialogue to co-develop the right application of your solution for their jurisdiction based on their specific need.

31. Does the "title" slide count as one of the five slides that get uploaded for the "Solution Overview"?

No

32. Are you able to share a past example of a submission?

We don't have permission to share an application from another company, unfortunately, due to the confidentiality of our submissions.

33. How long are the proposed projects for?



It is up to you to propose a project timeline based on the budget you propose. There is no set project duration or start date, as each solution is different and may require different demonstration conditions.

34. Is the [scorecard](#) an internal document used for the judges or something that the Solution Providers fill out?

The document is meant for the reviewers (judges) to fill out, so there is nothing that needs to be done with it if you are submitting as a solution provider. It is made available to solution providers to add transparency to the process.

35. Are there issues or concerns with submitting again but for a new project?

No issues! Please resubmit if you'd like with new solutions or old ones, but you will be asked to detail what changes (if any) have been made since the last time you applied.

36. Do the same cities participate in the Challenge every year? Are there any new ones?

While many of the participating communities have participated in the past, there are usually some who are completely new to the process. Regardless of how many participating jurisdictions are repeats, we almost always have some new people reviewing applications.

37. Does it make sense to submit one application for all products, or does it make sense to break to a few themes?

If you believe the solutions are truly unique and different, then you could submit different applications that would get different feedback. If it's the same solution that can be applied three different ways, we recommend one application. Make sure you distinguish how each application is different if you submit three.



38. Are there any in-person requirements (presentations, pitches, etc) that would necessitate travel, during the application process?

There are no in-person requirements during the application process that necessitate travel. Finalist interviews take place virtually. Should you be selected as a winner for deployment and scoping, this may necessitate some travel after the award (depending on the nature of your solution), which you are welcome to budget for in the scope that you submit with your application.

39. What does it mean that the Solution Provider must legally be able to perform work in the State of Colorado?

If selected for a project, you would need to be a registered business in Colorado with the Secretary of State, which is a very simple process. More info can be found here:

<https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/business/businessHome.html>

40. Can you clarify the \$25K scope? It applies for the 1st demonstration, and then again every time it's deployed - is that how it works? Meaning, if we win, we would receive \$25k, and if it is also deployed in 5 different cities, we would receive an additional \$125k?

The \$25K applies for the 1st implementation. Any additional scope beyond the initial \$25K deployment is flexible and depends on the unique needs and restrictions of the jurisdiction(s) you work with. If you get selected by more than one municipality, your scopes for each of them are likely to be different.

If your initial \$25K deployment is successful and the municipality wants to scale your solution beyond that, the budget is entirely flexible and not limited by the \$25K restriction for the first implementation. Do note that service fee of 5% applies to any expansion of the awarded solution.

41. Does the 5% service fee also apply to future revenue from non-Challenge related partners?



The service fee only applies to contracts that are a direct result of the demonstration project through partners that selected you through the C2 Challenge.

42. If we are looking at jointly submitting our solution with another company, can we do this knowing that we are allocating \$25K each for our solution?

If you are submitting a joint solution, the budget for the entire scope should be under \$25K. Therefore, you should not submit a joint solution that allocates \$25K to each solution provider included in the proposal. This is because our jurisdictions have been asked to allocate \$25K per project.

43. If we were chosen and began working with you all, would the 5% revenue be forever, after granted up to \$25,000? If the business, for example, were ever to operate at a loss and in debt or bankruptcy, would we still need to deliver that 5% or is there some sort of maturity date to when the 5% service fee is up?

The 5% of project revenue requirement would remain in place for the life of the contract and any resulting additional contracts with the customer you received through the Challenge. So, the contract you have with the customer would dictate the term of our 5% fee. If your company were to go bankrupt during a contract performance period before we were compensated, it would be up to us to put a lien on the company for the remaining revenue we were due.