

# Innovation Spurs Regional Economic Development



**NORTH TEXAS**  
Innovation Alliance

*Jennifer Sanders*  
*May 5, 2025*

# How the World Used to Think of DFW....



# DFW Today...



24 FORTUNE 500  
Company HQs



3<sup>rd</sup> Highest Technology Jobs  
in US [August 2024]

487

People Move to the  
Dallas Region Every  
Day [July 2024]



#22 of 500 Most Innovative  
Cities in the World

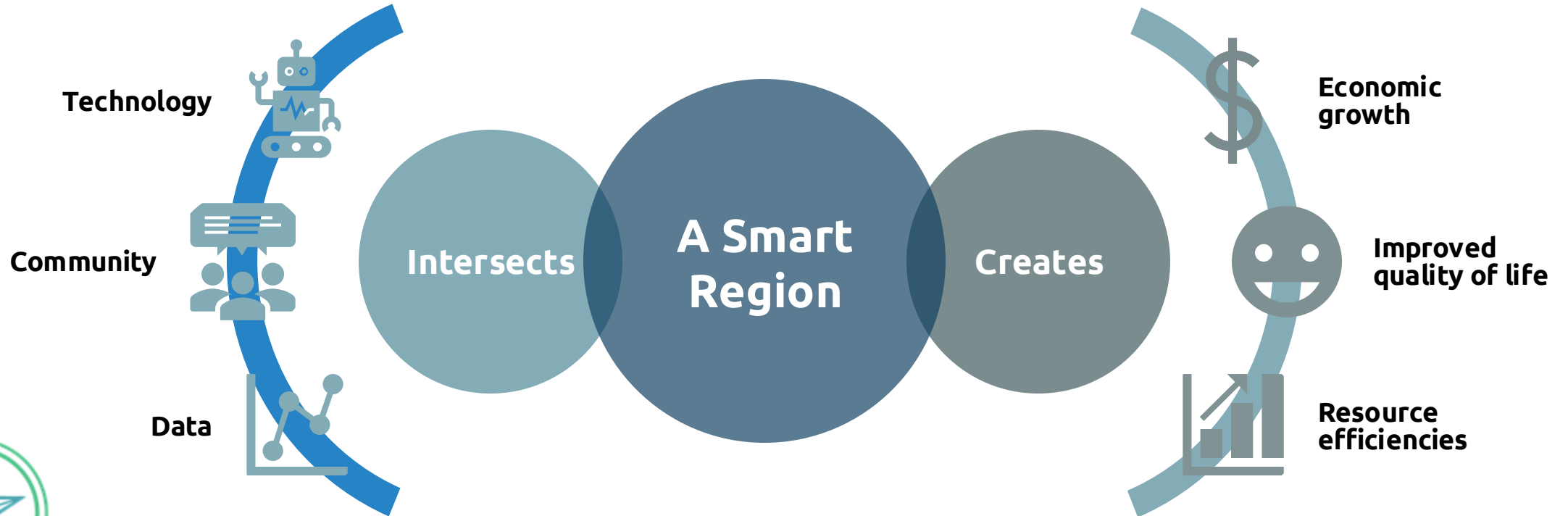


BIG D: Think, Dream  
and Do Big



#11 Tech City in the  
World

# Envisioning Smart Cities & Smart Regions



# Why a Collaborative Approach is Critical



Blurring  
Geographic  
Boundaries



Aging  
Infrastructure



Extreme Weather  
Events & Health  
Crises



Workforce Pipeline  
and Upskilling



Population Inflow



Technology  
Implementation &  
Challenges

# Cross-cutting is 'Smart': An Integrated Approach

- What is the North Star – are connections made early and often?
- How can a lens of innovation and 'one investment -> many outcomes' become part of DNA?
- What does success look like?

Partnerships

Resilience

Workforce

Resident  
Satisfaction

Economic  
Development

Efficiency

Revenue  
Generation

Mobility

Housing



# Who We Are



**The North Texas Innovation Alliance (NTXIA)** is a 501(c)3 consortium that includes governmental and civic organizations, public agencies, private companies and academic institutions who are committed to working collaboratively to pursue innovation in the North Texas region.

## **We bring people together**

to create a more connected, smart, and resilient landscape, highlighting the culture of innovation in our area and expediting the implementation of forward-thinking solutions.

**NTXIA is the largest initiative of its kind in the United States.**

**“NTXIA is a great treasure to have in our backyard.”**

*Jonathon Bazan, Assistant County Administrator, Dallas County*



# Why the Consortium Approach Works



**2015**

***Fastest to-market Smart Cities Initiative in the US***



**NORTH TEXAS**  
**Innovation Alliance**

**2020**

***Largest Regional Alliance in the US***



NATIONAL SMART COALITIONS  
**PARTNERSHIP**

**2021**

***Region of Regions Model Covering Seven States & 150+ Cities***

**A freestanding, independent nonprofit allows for:**

- Flexibility and speed-to-market
- Convening of best-minds
- Execute pilots quickly prior to formal procurement, under the guidance of public sector partners



# NTXIA Members & Partners



## NTXIA Lead Partners



## NTXIA Pivotal Partners



## NTXIA Partners



## National Partners:



**Innovation in the Works...**



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## PROGRAMS

- Immersive Innovation Series
- Internet for North Texas (I4NTX)
- Urban Resilience Fellows Program
- FBI Innovation Partnership
- Smart Cities Global Startup Challenge
- Smart City Expo World Congress Delegation
- Calls for Innovation: Demo Day & Pilots



Urban Resilience  
Fellows Program



## OUR WORK



Interdisciplinary Networking	Roundtables	Field Trips	Demonstration Events
Promotion of North Texas Innovation	Specialized Workshops & Symposiums	Region- & Nation-Leading Projects	Programs to Build a More Resilient Workforce

The Journey:  
*Local ->  
Regional ->  
National.*



2015  
*Fastest to-market Smart  
Cities Initiative in the US*

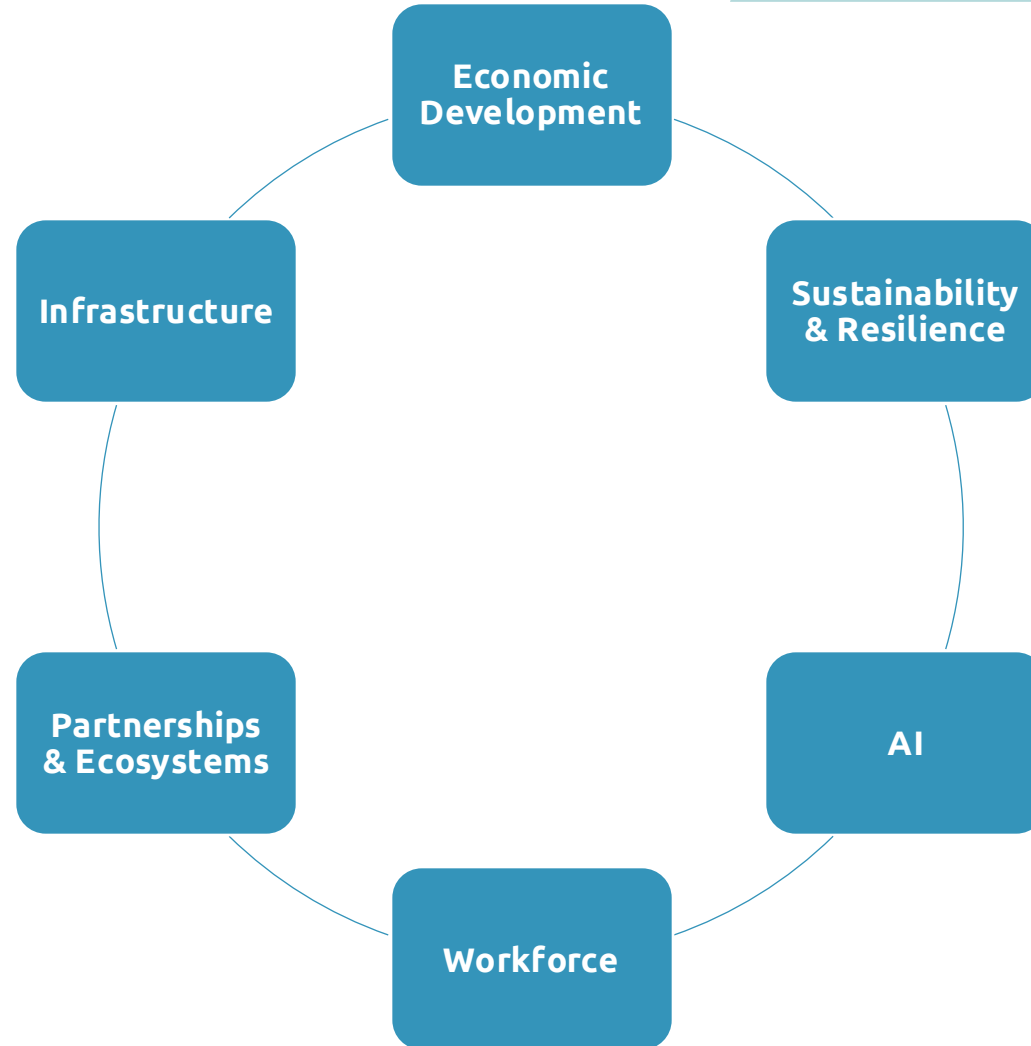


2020  
*Largest Regional Alliance  
in the US*



2021  
*Region of Regions Model  
Covering Seven States &  
150+ Cities*

# 2025 PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMS





# Reflections from 2025 Vision Session



## Five Key Themes & Representative Headlines:

### 1. Economic Development

Escape from New York:  
DFW's Y'all Street now the  
financial center of the US

North Texas is the new capital  
for tech, innovation and  
sustainability for North  
America

### 2. Workforce

Metroplex surpasses Europe  
in workforce readiness

North Texas will be the  
premier ecosystem for  
cultivating and retaining  
innovative tech talent that  
drives regional economic  
growth and community  
prosperity.

### 3. AI

Equitable Prosperity AI Hub  
Leads the Nation in Bridging  
the Digital Divide and Driving  
Inclusive Economic Growth in  
2025

Dallas Fort Worth region  
becomes international  
hub for AI innovation  
through strategic  
partnerships

### 4. Sustainability & Resilience

Dallas Community comes  
together to address  
emissions

Food waste composting  
programs set up in  
preparation for the World  
Cup

### 5. Partnerships/Ecosystem

How North Texas aligns public and private  
partners to make the World Cup a calling card for  
talent, companies and startups to move to NTX

North Texas secures all fortune 500 by  
leveraging local partners and global events

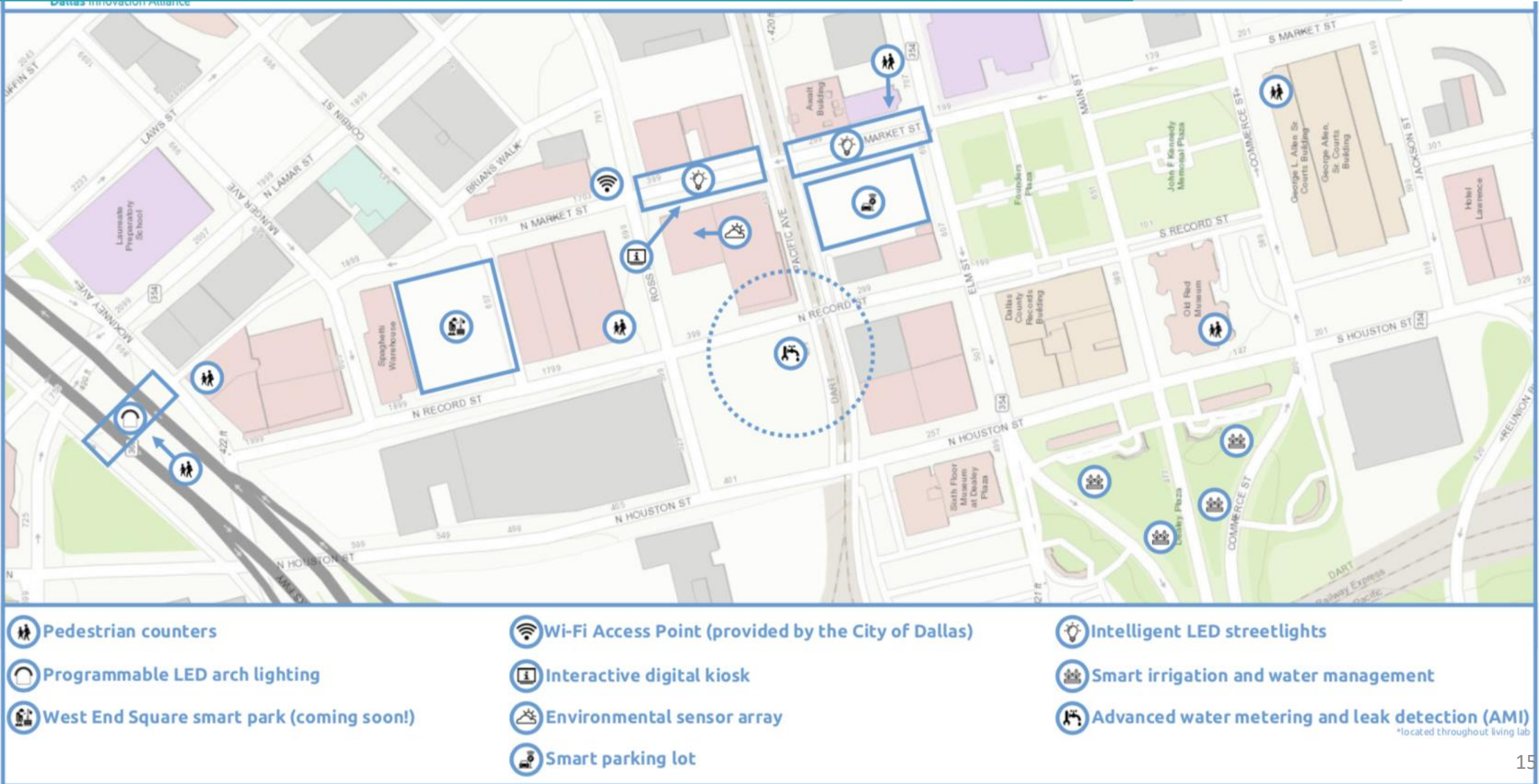


# Early Learnings & Successes



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# SMART CITIES LIVING LAB: THE WEST END



# REIMAGINING HIGHWAYS AND PARKING LOTS

DALLAS ALLEY REIMAGINED + WEST END SQUARE PARK





## Pedestrian activity

- Pedestrian traffic increased 13% YoY

## Economic development

- Small business revenue increased 12% YoY

## Public Safety

- Crime decreased 6% YoY



# SUPERSIZING STARTUP CLUSTERS: McKINNEY INNOVATION FUND



**Since its launch in 2020,** the MEDC Innovation Fund has:

- Supported 45 startups
- Created 931 local jobs
- Average salary of \$80,000.00
- MEDC's larger innovation investment strategy includes the launch of the Plug & Play, a global innovation platform, with shared support and recruitment of P&P by Frisco and McKinney

**Grant types offered by the Innovation Fund include:**

- **Growth:** A grant of up to \$200,000 to support early-stage technology startups
- **Expansion:** A grant of up to \$500,000 for startups seeing rapid growth
- **Relocation:** A grant of up to \$500,000 for startups that relocate their primary headquarter facilities to McKinney

The McKinney Economic Development Corporation is funded by a voter-approved half-cent sales tax.





# Integrated Research Drives Economic Growth



UTD awarded \$30 million from DoD to establish energy storage systems campus



**Texoma Semiconductor Tech Hub  
Designated by US EDA**  
*Texoma Semiconductor Tech Hub will foster a consolidated semiconductor innovation ecosystem with supply chain resilience.*



Dallas selected as one of three national hubs for new medical innovation federal agency



Department of Commerce Invests \$8.8 Million to Grow Biotechnology Workforce in North Central Texas Through American Rescue Plan Good Jobs Challenge



**Center for Electric, Connected and Autonomous Technologies for Mobility (eCAT)**

*Funded by National Science Foundation's Industry-University Cooperative Research Centers Program*

# CROSS JURISDICTION COLLABORATION



**FRISCO**

**PLUGANDPLAY**

**ME DC**  
McKinney Economic Development Corporation

**Member**

**SMART CITY EXPO  
WORLD CONGRESS**

COME SEE WHAT  
STARTUP  
COLLABORATION  
LOOK LIKE IN  
NORTH TEXAS!

Nov. 5-7, 2024  
USA Pavillion:  
Hall 3  
Booth D40

**Global Entry: Tips & Incentives for Startup Market Entry in the US**

NOV. 5 | 12:00PM-12:45PM | USA PAVILION  
HALL 3 | BOOTH D40

**NTXIA**

**FRISCO**

**ME DC**  
McKinney Economic Development Corporation

**PLUGANDPLAY**

**JEN SANDERS**  
North Texas Innovation Alliance

**JEREMIAH ANDERSON**  
Director of Innovation, Frisco Economic Development Corporation

**MICHAEL KOWSKI**  
CEO, McKinney Economic Development Corporation

**MICHAEL OLMSTEAD**  
Chief Revenue Officer, Plug & Play



# CALL FOR INNOVATION DRONE & ROBOTICS DEMO DAY



## Call for Innovation & Demo Day:

- 90+ Companies of Interest
- 10 Selected from Region, US and EU
- 7 County departments
- 65+ Attendees
- 6 additional public agencies across municipality, regional planning, public safety and transportation
- 4 higher-education institutions
- Economic development organizations
- Local, Industry, and National Media Coverage

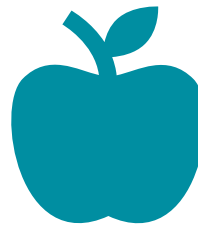
# Broadband Officially Designated as a Mode of Transportation by RTC



**North Central Texas  
Council of Governments**

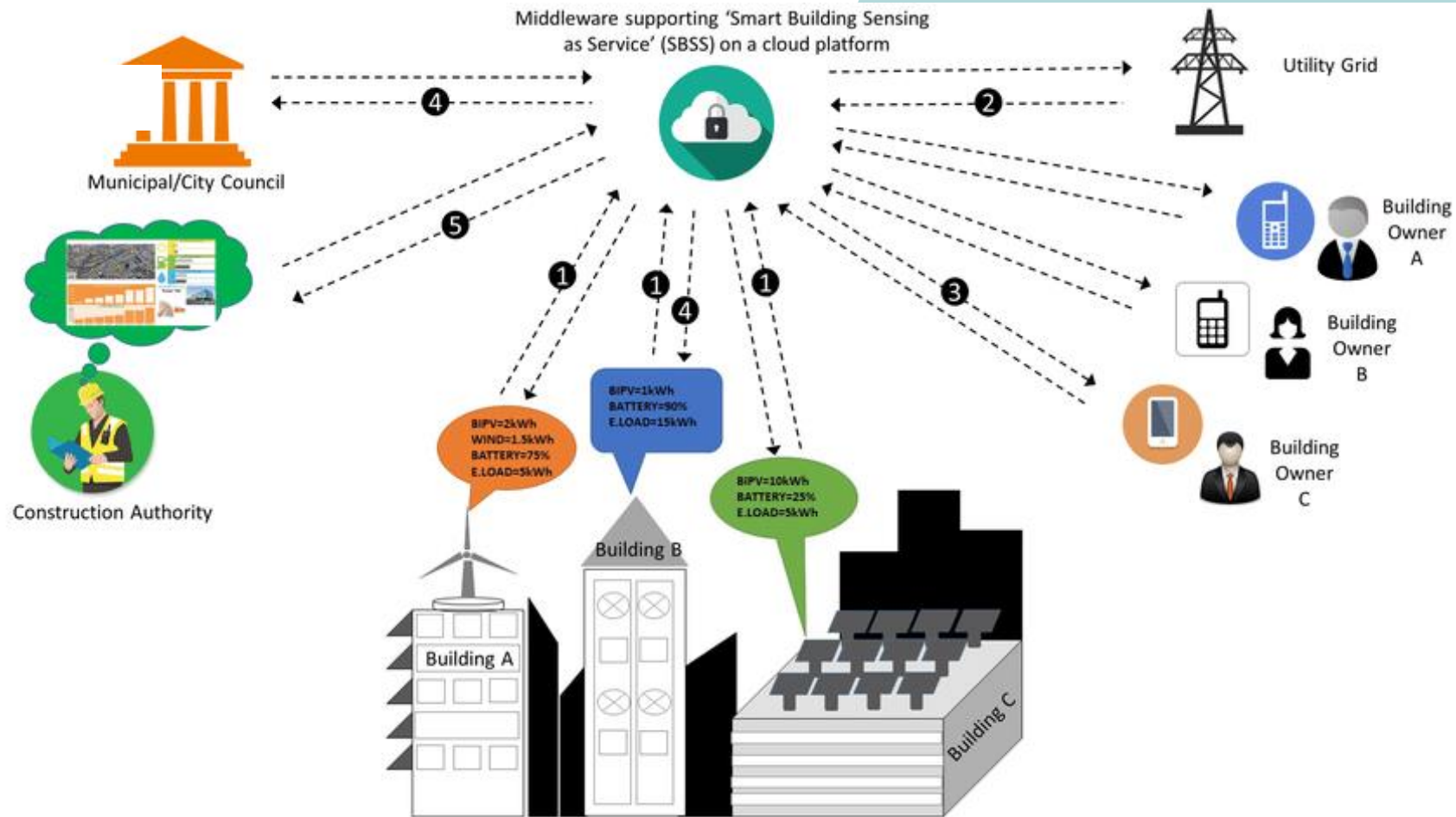
“In April, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for North Texas approved NCTCOG’s innovative broadband as transportation program. The program not only recognizes internet access as a crucial transportation mode, but it also establishes a robust framework for promoting widespread digital inclusivity across the North Texas region... we are not just expanding infrastructure; we are enhancing educational outcomes, economic opportunities, access to healthcare and quality of life improvements for residents”

## Digital Infrastructure IS Infrastructure





# The Role of CRE and P3s: Where Walls in and Walls out Meet





# Smart Right-of-Way



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# Economic Development: National P3 Testbeds



## 5G Smart Cities Testbed

The University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) in partnership with Colorado Smart Cities Alliance and Innosphere Ventures, [were awarded a \\$2 million dollar grant to launch a smart cities incubator and accelerator program](#), which will support workforce development in critical tech industries and create more than 200 jobs.

The grant is part of a larger statewide initiative being led by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, who announced that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) is committed to investing \$3.1 million in Colorado through grants to support the growth of high-tech business and cybersecurity workforce development.



# Future Agility Through Connected Public and Private Infrastructure Integration

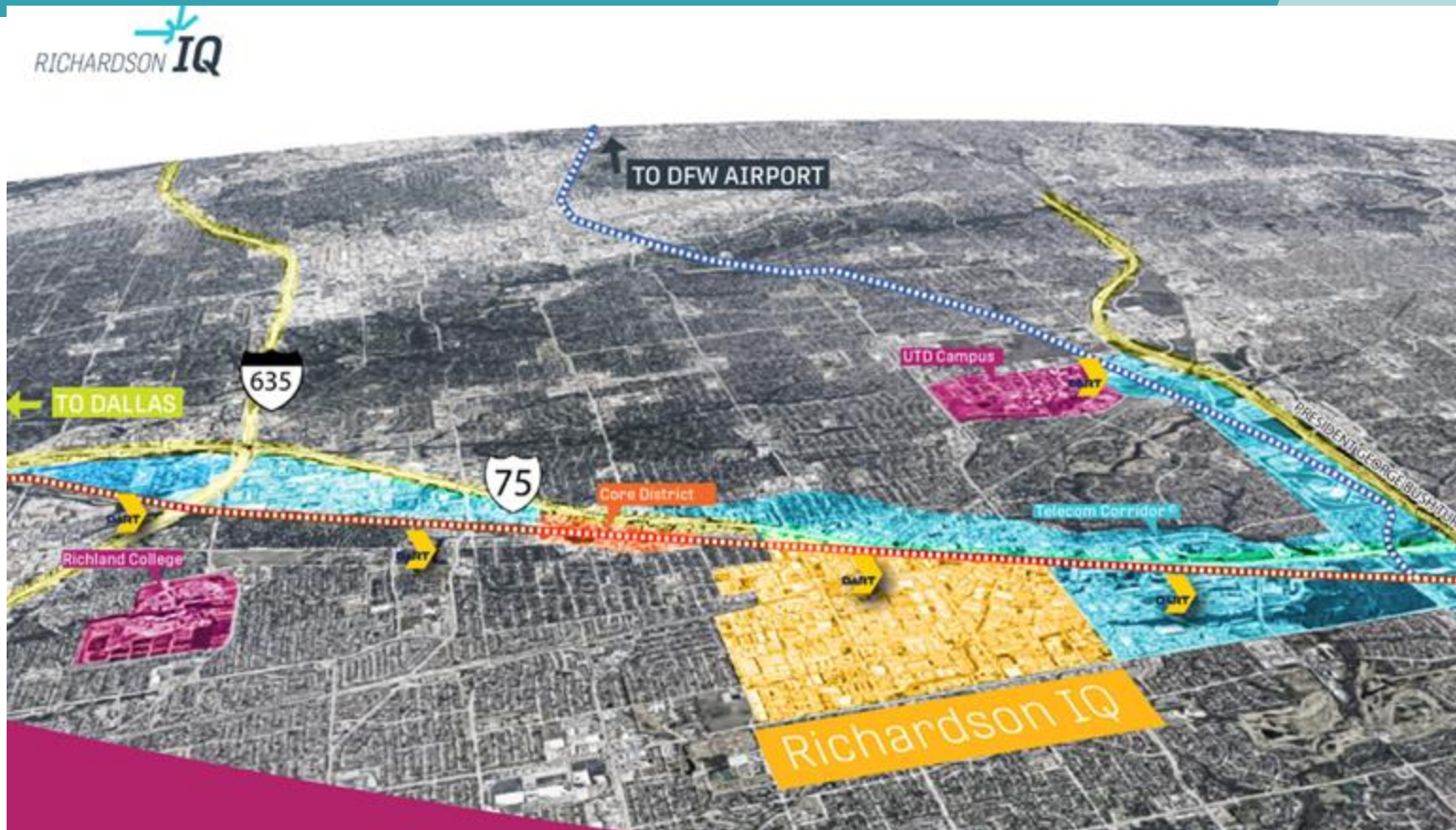


Curiosity Lab at Peachtree Corners is a publicly funded living lab designed to provide a real world test environment to advance next generation intelligent mobility and smart city technology.

Located within a 500 acre technology park where 7500 people work and more than 1000 people live, Curiosity Lab provides unique infrastructure and a supportive government to facilitate innovation.



# P3 Innovation District Developments: Richardson's The IQ



Howdy From

**NORTH**

**TEXAS**

Spurring  
Innovation





# Surprising the World: TX on the Global Stage



35+  
North Texas  
Representatives

600+  
Leads Generated

9  
Organizations  
Represented

11+  
North Texas Conference  
Session Speaking  
Opportunities

25k  
Conference Attendees

15+  
Relationships established  
internationally across  
four continents

800+  
Media Hits

40+  
Meetings across  
delegation with global  
partners

# Smart Cities Global Startup Competition



**MEET THE FINALISTS!**

**2024 Smart Cities Global Startup Challenge**

 Sial-tronica 22 SL SPAIN	 Ecosystem Informatics CANADA
 L&T Technology Services LLC INDIA	 Visioncraft CZECH REPUBLIC

**Watch the Pitch: 6 Nov 13:00 - 14:30**  
**US Pavilion: Hall 3 D40**

**SMARTCITY** Finalists will compete at SCEWC 2024 in Barcelona for prizes and the opportunity to bring their solution to the US in Texas and Georgia. Stay tuned to see who will shape the future of smarter cities!

Marketplace.city Curiosity Lab ME DC FRISCO NORTH TEXAS Innovation Alliance



26 Global Submissions  
4 Finalists  
1 Winner: Visioncraft.ai from  
the Czech Republic!

**Okay, Lets Talk About AI...**

*[AKA the \$19.9 T Question...]*



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# The Promise of AI

**Artificial Intelligence May Change Everything – and Already Can Impact:**

**Access to  
Education and  
Economic  
Opportunity**

**Healthcare**

**Public Safety**

**Disaster  
Response**

**Civic  
Engagement**

**Access to  
Government  
Services**

**78% of people in a recent poll think the benefits of generative AI outweigh the risks.**

Example:



**BOA FRAUD DEPT:**  
The transaction was blocked and no funds have been taken from your account. A representative will be contacting you shortly.

12:54 PM



# AI WILL CONTRIBUTE \$19.9 TRILLION TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY THROUGH 2030

— IDC



Indirect spending includes construction needed to create data centers, the power needed to run those centers and related hiring, as well as the gains from efficiencies and added revenue by adopting AI.

What we know two and a half centuries later is that AI can play a critical role in fostering broad-based economic development — and not just in terms of creating new industries, although this is no small thing. The potential of AI, in all its rapidly developing varieties, is even greater.

**One way to prosper is to identify areas where a country, region or city has a competitive advantage.** AI can perform real-time analyses to spot emerging opportunities. For example, an East Asian city used analytics models to identify two high-potential areas: beverages and auto parts. It focused its development efforts in these two sectors and saw per-capita GDP grow by \$8,500 in just six years.

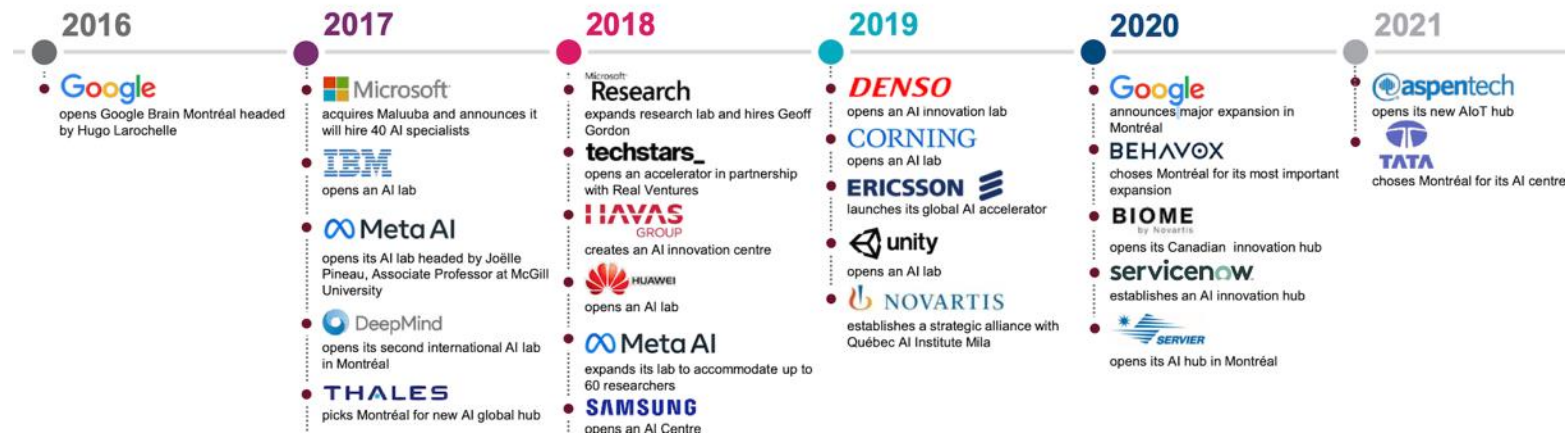
# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT USE OF AI



**Cincinnati used predictive analytics** to crunch a wide variety of data points to spot possible investors. The AI-enhanced effort that provided these insights, known as REDI Cincinnati, is credited with helping to attract some \$6.2 billion in capital investment over the last decade.

## How Montreal aims to become a world centre of artificial intelligence

*Impressive amounts of cash have been flowing into academia, public-private partnerships, research labs and startups active in AI. [And this was in 2017]*



# AI INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS FOR P3 BENEFIT



**Indirect costs** includes construction needed to to create data centers, the power needed to run those centers and related hiring, as well as the gains from efficiencies and added revenue by adopting AI.

**Operations require a substantial amount of energy and water** – while energy is regenerative, water is not, and often a secondary thought.

**Continuing to consider the Win-Win-Win for public, private, and people;** what does shared-cost, use and infrastructure look like?

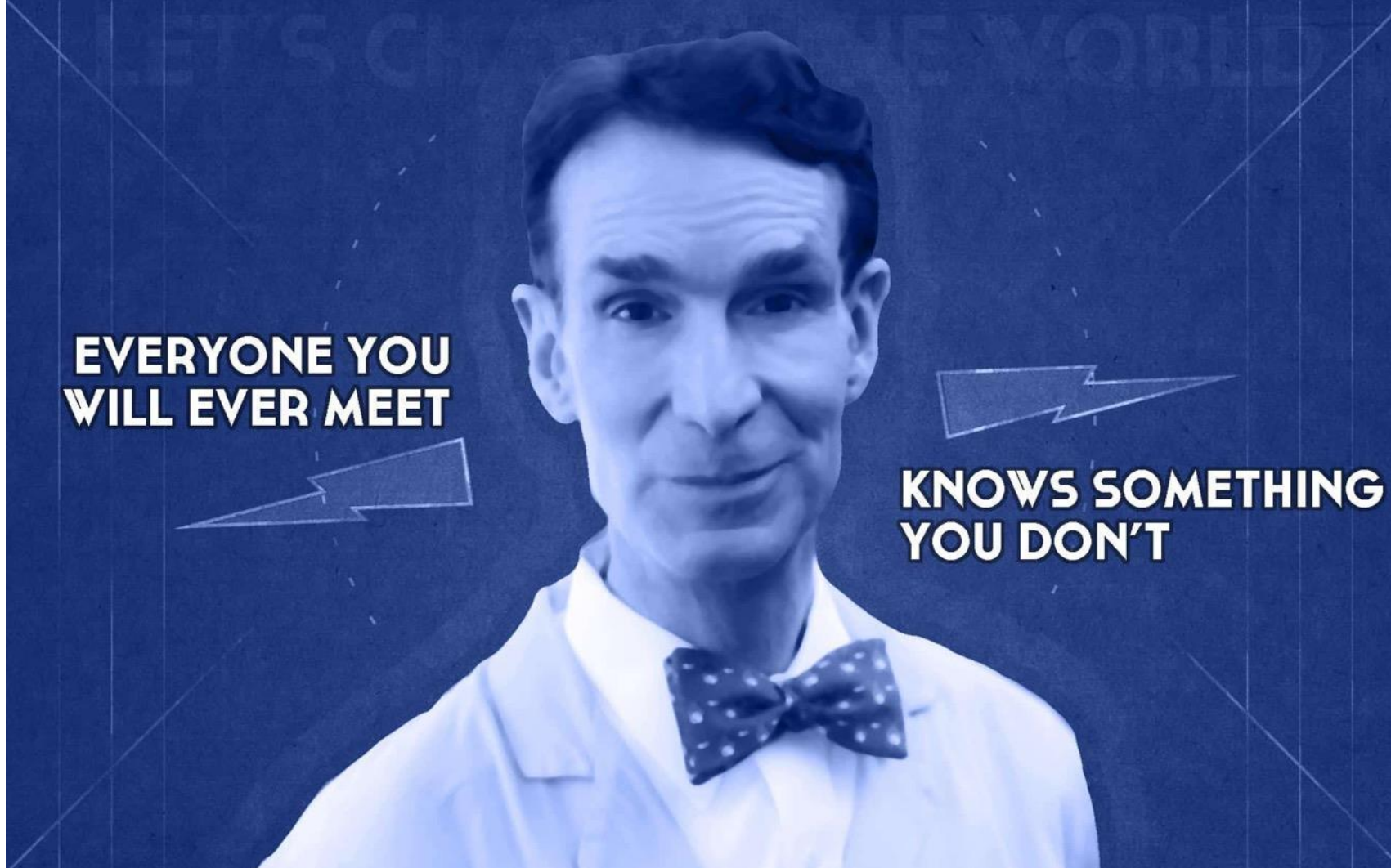
- **Site Selectors identify parcels with existing or upcoming capital improvement infrastructure projects in planning**
- **Economic Development Corporations or entities establish incentive structures including:**
  - Commitment to pre-build needed capacity, infrastructure, closed loop resource generation for relocated or expanded operations
  - Commitment from the company to dedicate a portion of the site for green infrastructure [greenspace, tree cover, closed loop water system use], and community use facilities.
  - Funding opportunities at the Federal level are aligned with this type and shared benefit structure of infrastructure projects.

# AI IN PROGRESS





# Humility Facilitates Innovation



# FURTHER DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS



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