Ford and Austin Launch City:One Challenge Program to Help Improve Mobility

- To help put residents at the center of the mobility conversation, Austin is linking up with Ford Motor Company, Dell Technologies, AT&T and Microsoft to launch the City:One Challenge, a program that provides a space to connect with global and local communities, explore their transportation needs, and collaborate on new solutions.

- Ford and the Austin Transportation Department will provide up to $100,000 for the testing of promising ideas through a pilot program.

- The Austin City:One Challenge will focus on how to help improve access to local services in East Austin such as grocery stores and healthcare, particularly for historically underserved or vulnerable families and community members.

**AUSTIN, Texas, June 24, 2019**— Ford and the Austin Transportation Department’s Smart Mobility team are launching the **Austin City:One Challenge**, a co-creation and crowdsourcing program for residents, businesses and community groups to propose and pilot solutions that improve mobility.

While Austin continues to be one of the fastest growing cities in the country, that growth has also impacted mobility in the city. The average driver, for example, now spends more than 50 hours in traffic a year, and as the city continues to grow and evolve, the need for new mobility solutions will continue to be apparent. Locally, city leaders are looking to make it easier for people living in all parts of Austin to access the services and resources required for living a healthy life.

The City:One Challenge is designed to complement the city’s efforts by facilitating a collaborative process with the community, offering residents the opportunity to share their experiences and suggest ideas for how to solve their most pressing mobility problems. The goal is to help improve the quality of life for Austin residents and visitors through dynamic mobility options that complement the existing transportation system.

“Austin has distinguished itself as both a city on the cutting edge of technology and one where community input helps shape solutions. Our mobility challenges are an ideal issue to make the focus of these signature attributes,” said Austin Mayor Steve Adler. “The City:One Challenge program is perfect for a city like ours. Austin is where great ideas become real.”

Throughout the eight-month City:One Challenge program, those who live, work and play in Austin are invited to explore dynamic mobility options focused around their top needs. Ford and Challenge collaborators, including sponsors AT&T, Dell Technologies and Microsoft, also will assist with the community collaboration process. The challenge provides up to $100,000 to fund pilots that test the top solutions.

Austin is the fourth city to launch the City:One Challenge in 2019, following previous announcements in Indianapolis, Detroit and Mexico City. Each challenge is tailored to the specific city or county and is focused on addressing its unique needs.

“To truly solve problems that affect the way people move in our cities, we believe it’s imperative to encourage all residents to take part in the process, identify serious issues, and propose solutions that lead to greater access for everyone,” said Jeff Jones, vice president, Ford City Solutions. “With the City:One Challenge, our goal is to engage people on a personal level, to really understand the unique issues that affect their day-to-day lives, as we look for solutions that have a real chance to improve their experiences.”
Ford launched its city challenge platform in 2018 in Pittsburgh, Miami-Dade County and Grand Rapids, Mich. The three challenges resulted in ongoing pilots addressing issues ranging from long, inefficient student pickup lines at schools to safer transportation methods for night shift workers who must travel during non-traditional hours.

How it works – and how to get involved

Starting today, Austin residents interested in participating can go to the City:OneChallenge website to share their mobility experiences and sign up for community working sessions. Ford and its collaborators will combine insights from online submissions and the community workshops with advanced data analytics to help shape the issues explored by the Challenge.

The first community workshop will take place on July 18 at the Asian American Resource Center, from 5:30 p.m CDT. Other workshop dates will be announced in the future on the Challenge website. Community members, businesses, startups and innovators can begin submitting ideas for new mobility solutions to the biggest challenges Austin travelers face during the application period, which opens the week of August 28.

In October, a committee of city officials, community stakeholders and corporate collaborators will select 12 finalists to attend a prototyping session and receive mentoring support to refine their ideas before submitting a final pilot proposal. Finally, a panel of judges working with Austin city officials, Ford, and its corporate collaborators will award up to $100,000 to fund pilots to test the top proposed solutions.

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