



All-America City Award

Celebrating the best in civic innovation since 1949

Each year, the National Civic League honors ten communities with the All-America City Award, recognizing excellence in local innovation, civic engagement, and cross-sector collaboration. This award highlights the potential within every community to address tough challenges and drive meaningful change through the collective efforts of residents, businesses, nonprofits, and government leaders.

Beyond recognition, the award provides an opportunity for reflection. Communities that apply bring together a diverse, cross-sector team to assess their strengths, review progress, address challenges, and share their unique stories. Through this yearlong process, communities gain deeper insights into civic excellence and foster stronger connections.

Cities, counties, tribes and community organizations of all types are invited to apply.



“It changed our community. We bonded with our own team, some of whom were strangers, as well as other cities. It was a glimpse of the America I knew was out there.” -All-America City Event Attendee

Benefits to Applying



Finalists and winners often see a significant boost in tourism and grant opportunities, while also finding it easier to attract and retain businesses, leading to job creation and a stronger tax base. They also gain exclusive benefits and perks from our partners.



The All-America City Award experience breathes new life into communities, instilling a renewed sense of pride, hope, and teamwork that participants carry home with them. Communities also gain valuable peer learning and expert guidance, swapping proven solutions with communities from across the country.



Winning the award elevates local initiatives to a broader platform, earning communities valuable notoriety. Winners are celebrated on a national stage and through additional publications and events with our partner organizations, plus in-community celebrations that bring the honor home.

Learn More: NationalCivicLeague.org/America-City-Award/

2027 All-America City Award

Enhancing Economic Wellbeing through Inclusive Civic Engagement

Across America, communities are discovering that civic and economic health go together: when residents have both a voice in shaping their community and a hand in building it, opportunity follows. The 2027 All-America City Award will recognize communities putting residents in the driver's seat of local economic life, building inclusive local economies that reduce inequality, create pathways out of poverty, encourage entrepreneurship, and expand opportunity for everyone. The award will spotlight places across the country where residents, businesses, and local institutions are working together to ensure that economic decisions are community-led and that prosperity is broadly shared.

Many of today's democratic challenges, including declining trust, political disengagement, and polarization, are deeply connected to broader economic realities, including rising costs of living, housing insecurity, regional economic decline, wage inequality, debt burdens, unemployment, and changing labor markets. By addressing these economic pressures through inclusive decision-making and problem-solving, communities are discovering innovative solutions that strengthen not just their economies, but their democracies.

The 2027 award will recognize communities that are tackling these challenges by welcoming residents and community partners into economic decision-making, from housing, zoning, and development to public budgeting and workforce policy.

Some projects adhering to this year's theme include:

- Participatory budgeting initiatives that give residents decision-making power over how public funds are allocated.
- Programs that support new entrepreneurs and connect them to networks and markets.
- Efforts to restore economic mobility by helping people find and keep quality local jobs.
- Community wealth-building efforts such as cooperative business incubators, community land trusts, and local purchasing initiatives that keep economic benefits in the community.
- Coalitions of residents, businesses, workers, and civic organizations driving policy change on issues like housing affordability, childcare access, food security, and living wages.
- Community development corporations and other nonprofits that support programs on job training, financial literacy, business startups, and other programs.
- Policymaking processes that bring workers, businesses, unions, and residents into regional economic planning and development decisions.
- Youth economic empowerment programs that combine job training, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and civic leadership to build long-term economic success.
- Mutual aid networks and community care initiatives that strengthen economic resilience by connecting neighbors with resources, skills, and support.
- Immigrant economic inclusion initiatives that remove barriers to employment, business ownership, and financial participation for new Americans.
- Place-based economic revitalization efforts led by residents in communities affected by disinvestment or regional economic decline.

Important Dates:

June 2026-May 2027: AAC Webinar Series

December 28, 2026: Letters of Intent Due

February 19, 2027: Applications Due

March 2027: Finalists Announced

March-June 2027: Competition Preparation

June 25-27 2027: AAC Competition & Event in Denver, CO

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