

OUR IMPACT IN 2023 & PLANS FOR 2024



DEAR FRIENDS,

In 2023, it was our honor to have provided more than 250 leaders in 117 cities with valuable peer learning experiences, leadership development opportunities, and policy resources that advance our network's core values of equity, sustainability, and democracy, culminating in a sold out Winter Meeting in January 2024. Thank you so much for your support!

Read on to learn about our work in 2023 and what to look forward to in 2024.

SUPPORTING NEW MAYORS

In the spring of 2023, we convened our fourth iteration of the [New Mayors Cohort](#), designed to offer mayors in their first term resources and peer support for transitioning from campaigning to governing on the high road. 11 participating mayors convened in Madison, WI for an in person kick-off and then again for three virtual convenings. We are grateful to a host of mentor mayors for providing their experience and expertise during these sessions, including Mayor Kim Norton (Rochester, MN), Mayor Sangeetha Ryapati (Moline, IL), Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway (Madison, WI), Mayor Tishuara Jones (St. Louis, MO), Mayor Nikylan Knapper (Maplewood, MO), Mayor Derek Slaughter (Williamsport, PA), and Mayor Edward Sundquist (Jamestown, NY).

2023 participants included:

- Mayor Julia Arata-Fratta • Fitchburg, WI
- Mayor Nicole Brown • Ypsilanti, MI
- Mayor April Graves • Brooklyn Center, MN
- Mayor Burney Jenkins • Georgetown, KY
- Mayor Jaime Kinder • Meadville, PA
- Mayor Heidi Lueb • Tigard, OR
- Mayor Charles Maughan • Corvallis, OR
- Mayor Carmen Montano • Milpitas, CA
- Mayor Hollie Rogin • Lyons, CO
- Mayor Donya Sartor, PhD • Jonesboro, GA
- Mayor Russell Stroud • Goshen, AR
- Mayor Hollies J. Winston • Brooklyn Park, MN

UPLIFTING WOMEN MAYORS

We continue to provide a space for safe dialogue and resources to advance the leadership of women mayors through our [Women Mayors Network](#) (WMN). This year, the WMN hosted sessions on communications strategies to women mayors and women mayoral candidates, and launched a number of new national partnerships to support this work. We are grateful and honored to share that the WMN received generous support from the Barbara Lee Family Foundation as part of its decision to sunset the Foundation at the end of 2024. With this support, we're excited to announce the launch of a new research project aimed at better understanding and documenting the unique challenges and opportunities that women mayors face in the transition to being elected to an executive leadership role, and creating resources to support newly elected mayors succeed in their role. Stay tuned!

UNIQUE RESOURCES FOR A UNIQUE ROLE

Mayors across the country are grappling with a myriad of intersectional challenges that impact their ability to lead. MIP is meeting this need with resources specifically designed to address mayors' needs and roles, including:

- May 2023 marked our 2nd year of hosting #MayorsSafetyMonth to shed light on the increase in political violence aimed at all mayors, in particular women and mayors of color. We released [Reporting and Responding to Political Violence](#), resources to support physical and online safety and recommendations for making the case for increased security while preserving democratic processes. Stay tuned for new resources in May 2024.
- At our Winter 2023 Meeting we hosted a mayors-only session on Conscious Leadership in Polarized times with Dr. Annice Fisher and Betsy Hodges (former Mayor, Minneapolis, MN). The session provided resources and a safe space to share experiences and strategies to advance racial equity.

PROVIDING INSIGHT ON LOCAL POLICY INNOVATION

- Water Affordability: With our partners at The Water Center at Penn and the US Water Alliance, we continued our [water affordability program](#), offering peer networking through technical assistance to mayors and water utility leaders focused on supporting affordable, efficient, resilient, and equitable water systems. In 2023, our focus expanded to include aiding utilities in accessing federal funding opportunities and supporting communities in their efforts to mitigate emerging contaminants such as PFAS.
- Pedestrian Safety: In 2023, we launched the inaugural [Mayors Institute on Pedestrian Safety](#) with our partners at AARP Livable Communities and Smart Growth America, which convened a national cohort of 9 mayors committed to supporting mayors develop their knowledge and skills to champion safer streets. Applications for our 2024 cohort open Jan. 19th. See the brief included in your materials for more info and a full roster of participants.
- Health and equity: In partnership with Healthy Babies Bright Futures, our [Healthy Babies Initiative](#) continued to support city-led efforts to improve infant and maternal health and reduce health disparities. The program supported projects aimed at improving access to healthy local food, reducing the use of toxic materials in childcare settings, increasing funding and resources for healthy homes, and bolstering sustainable procurement.
- Public Safety: We continue to highlight mayoral efforts to reform and improve public safety, expanding our work with national partners like the Policing Project at NYU School of Law and hosting a [Mayor's Roundtable on Alternative Response & Reimagining Policing](#) that highlighted efforts in Albuquerque, NM and Brooklyn Park, MN.
- Policy innovation: MIP staff produced content on a variety of policy topics, collaborating with mayors and policy experts nationwide to highlight best practices. 2023 resources included [electrifying city fleets](#), [land value-capture strategies](#), water utility [customer assistance programs](#), [equitable engagement](#), [supporting LGBTQ+ youth](#), and [equitable broadband access](#).

SUPPORTED AND ADVANCED OUR NETWORK

- Our [2023 Winter Policy Meeting](#) hosted timely discussions about equitable solutions for pedestrian safety, crisis management, and innovative city financing strategies.
- The Honorable Mayor Paige Cagnetti, in our member city Scranton, PA, hosted the [Summer 2023 Annual Meeting](#) in August. Attendees learned strategies to advance housing quality and tenant protections, electric vehicle fleet transition, fiscal transparency, and private sector job quality. Highlights of the meeting included a keynote address from former Mayor and Executive Director of People for the American Way Svante Myrick, engaging tours of Scranton, and a spectacular reception and Innovation Showcase hosted on the stage of the historic Ritz Theatre.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2024, we will continue to advance equity, sustainability, and shared democracy in cities by working to serve our member cities while providing peer networking and leadership development opportunities to the increasingly diverse group of mayors and cities across the US. Here's a sneak peak at what we're excited about in 2024:

- **MIPS 2024:** This year will mark our 2nd offering of the Mayors Institute on Pedestrian Safety, in partnership with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Livable Communities and Smart Growth America. Through this effort we hope to provide 10 mayors with new skills to advance pedestrian safety and lift up their leadership on this issue nationally. Applications open January 19th!
- **Women Mayors' Network:** This January, we hosted a WMN reception in partnership with RepresentWomen, an opportunity for women mayors to connect with each other and national resources to support and advance their leadership. We are also excited to kick off an ambitious research project that aims to better capture the experience of women mayors during their transition to governing, assess common challenges, and provide incoming women mayors with the tools to address them.
- **Policy resources:** 2024 will see a shift in our Water Affordability work to address the intersection of water affordability and the mitigation of emerging contaminants like PFAS, with opportunities for mayors to connect with peers and access resources on this critical topic. We will also release policy briefs on best practices for public safety reform, strategies to support low-wage workers, and more.
- **Member support:** We continue to connect with and support our national network of Member City Mayors. In addition to free meeting registration, members can request up to three policy memos per year on topics of their choice. [Learn more about membership here!](#)
- **MIP Summer Meeting:** Stay tuned for an exciting announcement about our summer meeting, set for Aug. 7-10th, 2024! You can expect a 3-day event meant to send you home with new, innovative policy ideas, time to connect and recharge with your fellow mayors, and our signature city tours and Innovation Showcase. As always, registration fees are waived for MIP members.

With gratitude,



Katya Spear & the MIP team



MAYORS INNOVATION PROJECT



mayors
innovation
project

The Mayors Innovation Project (MIP) is a national peer learning network of mayors committed to building the high-road in cities. In 2023, mayors and city leaders from 116 cities came together to share policy ideas and solutions through various meetings, webinars, and special cohorts. Highlights include:

In partnership with the Water Center at Penn, WaterNow Alliance, and US Water Alliance, our **Water Affordability Community of Practice** (CoP) spotlighted best practices on challenges related to water affordability. This year, we hosted **4 Water Wednesday webinars** aimed at supporting city and utility leaders in creating affordable, efficient, and equitable water systems. Topics included lessons in public engagement, the need for Low Income Household Water Assistance Programs (LIHWAP), water affordability, getting assistance to those in need by utilizing community resource fairs, and a roundtable discussion with mayors on PFAs.

The Water Center
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



WATER AFFORDABILITY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



New mayors gathered for an in-person meeting in Madison, WI.

In May, 12 mayors joined the **4th New Mayors Cohort**. This cohort offers selected first-term mayors the opportunity to join a small leadership development program informed by current and former mayors, with outreach and curriculum designed to primarily serve mayors who are “firsts” in their respective cities, including first mayors of color, first woman mayors, and first LGBTQ+ mayors. The cohort, composed of mayors from California to Pennsylvania, gathered in person from May 17-19 in Madison, Wisconsin and continued to meet regularly on Zoom to share experiences and identify solutions to their unique challenges as mayors.

We continued advancing the leadership of women mayors through our **Women Mayors Network** (WMN). The WMN convened at the 2023 Winter Meeting with a lunch presented by the Barbara Lee Family Foundation (BLFF). BLFF Executive Director, Amanda Hunter, presented research and strategies to women mayors on overcoming the obstacles that women candidates and leaders face. In addition, BLFF and the WMN partnered to host a webinar, Campaigning While Female, in September. This webinar provided a space for women mayors to voice struggles and successes and find support in their shared experiences.



Women Mayors Network attendees.

In collaboration with AARP Livable Communities and Smart Growth America, we also held our first ever **Mayors Institute on Pedestrian Safety** (MIPS) cohort. This program aims to support mayors in creating more equitable, vibrant, and safer communities for everyone. The cohort, composed of nine mayors, held five online sessions throughout the year followed by an in-person meeting in Boston, Massachusetts in October. The session gave mayors the opportunity to discuss their critical role in prioritizing safe streets, tour innovative infrastructure to protect pedestrians and bicyclists, discuss best practices for communicating and advocating for pedestrian safety, and celebrate their cities in the first ever pedestrian-safety focused innovation showcase.



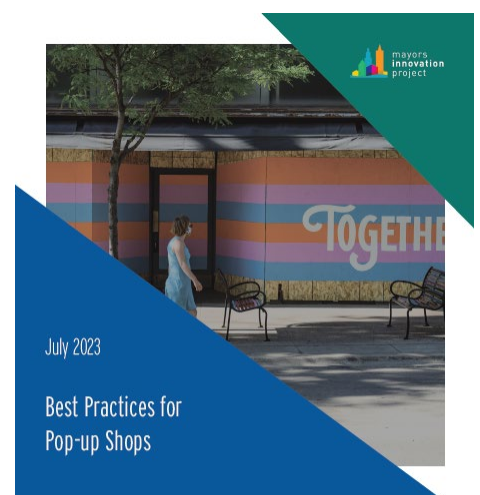
2023 Winter Meeting attendees.

Twice a year, MIP convenes mayors and other experts for informal exchange and fellowship and deep dives on a limited number of issues pre-selected by the MIP steering committee, which consists overwhelmingly of current and former mayors. Lead topics at our **2023 Winter Meeting** included leading under a microscope, locating funding sources to advance community growth, conscious leadership during polarizing times, and equitable solutions for pedestrian safety.

In MIP's **2023 Summer Meeting**, we delved into housing quality and tenant protections, electric vehicle implementation, fiscal transparency, and the city's role in private sector job quality.

With the goal of providing city leaders with policy ideas they can implement in their own cities, we released **10 blog posts** including our **Good Ideas for Cities** series. Topics included expanding broadband infrastructure, tips for reducing lead exposure, best practices for transitioning to electric vehicles, and more.

One of the benefits of joining the Mayors Innovation Project is access to **technical assistance** from staff and policy experts. This year members requested policy memos related to pop-up shops, greenfields, and resources to support homeless LGBTQ+ youth.



Katya Spear & Aaron Westling

Bill Lee of Trust for Public Land and Kyra Naumoff Shields of Healthy Babies Bright Futures stopped for a chat.

