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**For Immediate Release**

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**SMART COLUMBUS EXPERIENCE CENTER OPENS JUNE 30**

*First-of-its-kind learning destination on the Scioto Mile riverfront empowers residents to join Smart Columbus in transforming mobility in our city*

**COLUMBUS, Ohio**, June 25, 2018 – The Smart Columbus Experience Center, a destination for residents and visitors to envision the future of mobility and explore how they can help transform mobility in the Columbus region, will open to the public on June 30. Mayor Andrew J. Ginther will open the center to the public at 11:00 a.m., and the opening will be celebrated with a Smart Mobility Block Party from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The block party will be an opportunity for residents to learn about the diverse and exciting mobility options available to them, including electric vehicles, public transit, car sharing, ride sharing, bike sharing and more.

Experience Center visitors will see how new mobility options, such as connected, autonomous, shared and electric vehicles, will make Columbus a more connected community. Hands-on educational experiences and technology demonstrations will show visitors how technology and innovation in transportation will grow the local economy and create ladders of opportunity for central Ohio residents.

“Smart Columbus is about envisioning a future for our city that benefits us all, and transforming mobility to make our community safer, more equitable, more vibrant and more sustainable,” said Mayor Andrew J. Ginther. “I hope every resident who visits the center will see how our efforts to embrace the latest mobility technologies will personally benefit them; and that they will identify ways—big and small—that they can act to help us transport our city to the future.”

The center will also receive cities and technology leaders from around the world to share lessons learned from the implementation of Columbus’ smart city portfolio. As the winner of the 2016 Smart City Challenge sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Paul G. Allen Philanthropies, Columbus has embraced the task of teaching cities about its smart city successes and challenges, to help accelerate smart city advancements around the globe.

“The Smart Columbus Experience Center is an exciting addition to our skyline and our community,” said Alex Fischer, president and CEO of the Columbus Partnership. “We look forward to welcoming leaders from around the globe to Smart Columbus’ new home to share how we’re driving innovation and prosperity here in the Columbus Region.”



## **A Community and Global Center in Downtown Columbus**

The Smart Columbus Experience Center, located at 170 Civic Center Dr., will be open to the public seven days a week following the Grand Opening. It features a 3,000-square-foot showroom where visitors will have the opportunity to experience hands-on demonstrations of new mobility technologies, including:

- **Seeing is Believing:** A vision for the future is clear as day as it is projected via illustrations on the showroom windows onto the real Columbus streets and sidewalks outside. Through the illustrations, visitors will see how self-driving vehicles, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, connected intersections and even wearable devices can be incorporated into our landscape and daily life.
- **Understanding the Vision:** An interactive map featuring videos and future visualizations showcase the projects within the Smart Columbus portfolio. These vignettes give an inside look into how an intelligent transportation system and equitable access to transportation can impact everyday challenges faced by Columbus residents.
- **Cruising into the Future:** Visitors can experience firsthand how driving electric is a more exciting, convenient, sustainable and affordable way to get around our great city. A fleet of six electric vehicles will be on display and available for test drives through a connected vehicle environment provided by NXP and Cohda Wireless. Vehicles on display or available for test drives include a BMW i3 provided by BMW, a Chevrolet Bolt provided by Dave Gill Chevrolet, a Honda Clarity provided by Honda, a Mercedes-Benz GLE 55e provided by Daimler, a Nissan LEAF provided by Nissan North America and a Toyota Prius Prime provided by Toyota. An electric motorcycle provided by NXP and a Ford Ojo electric scooter will also be on display.
- **Tomorrow's Technology, Today:** Visitors will be able to touch and feel the latest mobility and energy efficiency technologies to understand how they'll improve city life in the near future.

The center will also serve as the new Smart Columbus' headquarters with workspaces, conference rooms and an event space.

## **A Grand Way to Explore the Experience Center**

The community is invited to the Experience Center Grand Opening on June 30 at 11:00 a.m. Mayor Ginther, State Senator Stephanie Kunze and COTA CEO Joanna Pinkerton will share opening remarks and officially open the space to the public.

To celebrate and give residents firsthand experience with the mobility options our city has to offer, Smart Columbus will transform the blocks surrounding the Experience Center into a Smart Mobility Block Party from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attendees can learn about electric vehicles and experience the performance of an electric vehicle for themselves by test driving a BMW i3, Chevy Bolt, Chrysler Pacifica, Honda Clarity, Mercedes GLE 550e, Nissan LEAF, Tesla Model S or Tesla Model X. Visit [www.smartcbus.com/smrt2018](http://www.smartcbus.com/smrt2018) to pre-register for a test drive.

Attendees can also see, touch, and climb aboard Columbus' multimodal transit options, with vehicles on display from the Central Ohio Transit Authority, Chariot, CoGo Bike Share, EmpowerBus, Hopper Carts, LimeBike, Lyft, MORPC's Gohio commute, SHARE, Yellow Cab of Columbus and Zipcar. Each of these services advance Smart Columbus' commitment to growing public transit and shared mobility in order to help the region grow in a competitive and sustainable way, and help give residents greater access to opportunity. To help residents get around in sustainable, healthy ways, OhioHealth will be share the benefits of walking, YayBikes!



will offer educational bike safety rides for adults and Smart Columbus will host a bike safety course for children.

The block party will also feature food trucks, yard games and a raffle for prizes including a \$100 Lyft gift card, \$100 Yellow Cab of Columbus gift card, \$100 Zipcar gift card, 31-day COTA pass and facility tour, a free one-year membership to CoGo, a bike from Franklinton Cycleworks and more.

Additional information about the Grand Opening and Smart Mobility Block Party is available at [www.smartcbus.com/experiencecenter](http://www.smartcbus.com/experiencecenter). Following the Grand Opening, the Experience Center will host extended hours and activities during festivals, including Red, White & Boom.

### **A Testament to The Columbus Way**

Like the Smart Columbus initiative itself, the development of the Experience Center was made possible through public and private sector collaboration. Construction and equipment cost approximately \$1 million, of which, \$500,000 came from the State of Ohio Capital Bill; \$300,000 came from the Columbus Partnership and its members: Cardinal Health, The Columbus Foundation, L Brands, Nationwide and The Ohio State University; and \$200,000 was funded by the \$10 million grant awarded to Columbus by the Paul G. Allen Philanthropies.

More than twenty organizations donated technology, design services, equipment and furniture to outfit the educational and office spaces, including:

- AT&T provided a reliable and secure network and high speed Wi-Fi as well as an interactive kiosk that educates guests on ways cities will be more connected in the future.
- NXP and Cohda Wireless will deploy a connected vehicle environment through the EV test drive area so drivers may experience this future technology. NXP also donated an electric motorcycle with an accompanying drone that alerts the driver to dangers or delays ahead.
- Pillar Technologies provided equipment and donated services to develop an augmented reality electric vehicle education experience and build the EV test drive registration platform. Pillar has also pledged additional pro-bono services to develop additional learning experiences on the future of mobility.
- AEP Ohio donated a display of its smart meter technology that highlights AEP's work to create a smarter energy future.
- Anthem donated furniture and equipment to help furnish the work spaces.
- Bosch installed interior and exterior smart sensors that measure and report visitation data and showcase how these sensors can help improve decision making and efficiency.
- Continental Office provided pro-bono interior design services and discounted furniture to outfit the workspace.
- DriveOhio, Route 33 and Transportation Research Center partnered to provide an educational display on various smart projects underway throughout the region.
- ElectrifyAmerica donated a Level 2 electric vehicle charger for visitor education.
- JadeTrack equipped the Experience Center with smart electricity submetering and a dynamic dashboard display that reports the center's energy consumption.
- OrangeBarrell Media provided generous cost share and in-kind design services for the creation of the center's exterior and donated an IKEA Smart City Kiosk. The six-foot-tall kiosk helps cities connect with residents and visitors by delivering information and resources in dynamic new ways.



- Security Contractors provided in-kind services for security camera installation and commissioning.
- The Ohio State University has committed to hosting quarterly events at the Experience Center highlighting the university's Smart City research and expertise, with the first event occurring this fall.
- VoiceMetrics, a local Columbus startup, donated an Amazon Alexa supported by its technology that provides real-time updates on the Smart Columbus program.

“Smart Columbus will transform our future through partnerships that make us greater than the sum of our parts,” said Fischer. “We approach big ideas and big challenges the ‘Columbus Way,’ and the Experience Center is no different. We are grateful for the support of these public and private partners, who gave us the means to bring this hands-on, dynamic educational space to life.”

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### **About Smart Columbus**

The City of Columbus' Smart Columbus plan won the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) \$40 million Smart City Challenge in June 2016 after competing against 77 cities nationwide to become the country's first city to fully integrate innovative technologies – self-driving cars, connected vehicles and smart sensors – into its transportation network. Columbus was also awarded an additional \$10 million grant from the Paul G. Allen Philanthropies to accelerate the transition to an electrified, low-emissions transportation system. Aligned investments totaling more than \$500 million have been made by the private, public and academic institutions in the region to support technology and infrastructure investments that upgrade Columbus' transportation network and help make Columbus the model connected city of the future. Smart Columbus is a regional smart city initiative co-led by the City of Columbus and Columbus Partnership that includes partnerships with The Ohio State University, Battelle, American Electric Power and many more.

For more information, visit the Smart Columbus website  
<https://www.columbus.gov/smartcolumbus/>.