

The Secretaries' Award for Public-Philanthropic Partnerships 2014

IBM Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs

Smarter Cities Challenge

IBM Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs: This organization applies IBM technology and talent to solve social issues worldwide.

www.ibm.com/smartercities



Launched: 2011

Public Partners: City of Syracuse, New York

In 2010, IBM Citizenship created the Smarter Cities Challenge (SCC) to help cities around the world address critical challenges that include economic development, transportation, social services, health care, and education. In 2014, the program was extended beyond its initial commitment to help 100 cities in 3 years. A total of 31 cities and counties in the United States were selected for SCC grants, including 4 cities in 2014.

The program contributes the time and expertise of IBM's top experts from different business units and geographies, putting them on the ground for 3 weeks to work closely with city leaders and deliver recommendations on how to make the city smarter. Since 2010, IBM has deployed more than 600 experts to provide strategic and practical advice to these municipalities. The total market value of the program is more than \$50 million, with each grant valued at approximately \$400,000.

The city of Syracuse, New York, received an SCC grant in the fall of 2011. Like many Rust Belt cities, Syracuse has seen an outmigration of jobs and people from the city center. The resulting rise in vacant properties, exacerbated by the foreclosure crisis, has negative effects across all segments of society and imposes direct costs on the city in code, fire, maintenance, and other costs. Mayor Stephanie Miner asked IBM to help the city understand, analyze, predict, and, therefore, prevent increases in vacant residential properties.

The IBM team developed a property vacancy prediction model and a roadmap to implement it, which the city has used to target the work of its land bank, among the first in the state. As a result, the city is able to reclaim nearly 2,000 vacant properties and repurpose them in ways that are revitalizing neighborhoods and can restore the tax base by millions of dollars over the next 8 years.

