

## Detroit Announces Winners of Toyota Mobility Foundation Global Challenge to Innovate in Clean Freight

- Winners drive innovation in electric semi-trikes, hydrogen production, and fast-charging battery systems
- Eastern Market lays groundwork for clean freight innovation ecosystem development
- \$1.5 million in implementation funding to be shared by winners to scale solutions in Detroit

**DETROIT (April 23, 2026)** – The Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF) and City of Detroit today announced three winners of TMF’s Sustainable Cities Challenge in Detroit. The announcement marks the conclusion of the three-year competition, designed to accelerate sustainable and inclusive urban mobility solutions.

In Detroit, the Challenge focused on demonstrating clean freight solutions in the Eastern Market, the cornerstone of Detroit’s food economy and a thriving commercial hub. The goal was to identify solutions that reduce fossil fuel use, lower freight costs, and support cleaner, more efficient movement of goods.

Each winner previously received \$180,000 in implementation funding and will now share \$1.5 million to scale their solutions across the city.

**Detroit Mayor Mary Sheffield** said, "Big ideas in clean freight technology have found their home in Detroit. This means cleaner air and a brighter future for residents. We are grateful to the Toyota Mobility Foundation for choosing Detroit out of more than 250 cities across the globe. Our residents gain cleaner air, innovators gain a city serious about sustainability, and together we embody Detroit’s legacy of innovation."

**City of Detroit’s Deputy Chief of Business Innovation and Emerging Industries, Ryan Michael**, said: "Globally, the need for advancement in clean freight technology is abundantly clear. Detroit values the opportunity to partner with TMF and the State of Michigan OFME on this vital emerging vertical.

**Vince Keenan, Head of Engagement Innovation, City of Detroit’s Office of Mobility Innovation**, said, "The Mayor’s Office of Mobility Innovation is designed to push big ideas. Whether it’s zero-emission micro-freight solutions that can zip through traffic to avoid (and prevent) congestion, fleet charging solutions that can deploy the capacity to charge in the same time it takes to fill up with diesel and a peek around the corner to the hydrogen solutions that could one day eliminate emissions entirely. The SCC has enabled Detroit to kick the tires on the future of clean freight today."

Together, the winning cohort marks the beginning of a cleaner, more resilient freight ecosystem in Detroit’s Eastern Market, with benefits that could extend beyond the city and region. TMF and the City of Detroit are proud to announce that Detroit’s winners will include:

**Civilized Cycles** – A Detroit-based manufacturer of ultra-light electric cargo vehicles, Civilized Cycles is scaling its patented Semi-Trike as a practical alternative to gas-powered delivery vans. Since the finalists were announced, the company has been exploring applications for its Semi-Trike, most recently selling one to Detroit-based company Grounded EVs, where it will be used as a platform to build a mini-RV.

**Zachary Schieffelin, Co-Founder and CEO of Civilized Cycles**, said: "The Sustainable Cities Challenge gave us the platform to prove that ultra-light electric freight vehicles can meet commercial demand. Detroit offered an ideal opportunity to test and demonstrate their potential in a real-world commercial environment. With this support, we’re expanding production and advancing a cleaner, more efficient model for how goods move through cities."

**ElectricFish Energy Inc** – A distributed energy infrastructure company advancing fast-charging EV solutions, ElectricFish recently launched **400squared™**, a **400 kW battery-integrated fast charger** and introduced its Turbo Charge program to enable seamless deployment at gas stations and fleet sites. Since being named a finalist, the company has been third-party endorsed by MotorTrend and received coverage in high-profile news outlets such as Axios.

**Anurag Kamal, Co-founder and CEO of ElectricFish**, said: “Detroit showed us what is possible when public and private collaborators come together to build resilient approaches to our nation’s critical infrastructure. We are excited to continue working with this forward-thinking city on deploying clean mobility to accelerate electrification, which may serve as a blueprint for the future of industrial growth and reducing carbon emissions at scale.”

**Neology** – A clean technology startup developing power systems that can produce hydrogen and electricity independently, useful in applications where clean, off-grid power is necessary. Since being selected as a finalist, Neology has conducted **more than ten live demonstrations across Detroit**, generating approximately **300 kWh of clean energy** – enough to power an average U.S. home for 10 days - and producing approximately **20 kilograms of hydrogen from ammonia**. These demonstrations serve as an example of the opportunities for validation of transportation concepts offered by the Sustainable Cities Challenge.

**Aris Maroonian, Founder and CEO of Neology**, said: “Detroit is once again showing that it leads at the edge of industrial innovation. With the support of the Toyota Mobility Foundation, we are able to move ammonia-to-hydrogen technology from prototype to deployment - accelerating the city’s growing hydrogen ecosystem. We believe scalable, affordable hydrogen solutions will play a critical role in the future of mobility, and we are proud to help position Detroit as a global showcase for that transformation.”

Over three years, the Sustainable Cities Challenge has brought together innovators, policymakers, industry leaders, and community stakeholders to explore new, sustainable ways of moving goods through Detroit. Through multiple challenge rounds and collaborative development, ideas have evolved into practical, scalable solutions designed to support a cleaner, more efficient, and resilient freight system for the city and its communities.

Detroit, the only city chosen in the western hemisphere, is one of three global cities participating in the Sustainable Cities Challenge, alongside Venice, Italy and Varanasi, India. Across the three cities, TMF has invested a cumulative \$9 million to tackle each city’s unique mobility challenge.

In every location, the goal remains the same: to catalyze solutions that enhance quality of life, support economic vitality, and advance more sustainable systems of movement. The Challenge turns bold ideas into tangible impact by empowering local innovation and pairing it with global expertise.

**Katy Trudeau, President and CEO of Eastern Market**, said, “For over a hundred years, Eastern Market has been a place where businesses have adapted and grown to keep Detroit fed. This Challenge builds on that legacy by bringing fresh ideas and innovations into a real-world working environment, created with the needs of the people and businesses who are here every day in mind. These solutions don’t just point to what is possible; they are already helping us move toward a cleaner, more efficient freight system that supports our community and can serve as a model for others.”

**Ryan Klem, Director of Programs for the Toyota Mobility Foundation**, commented: “In strong collaboration with the City of Detroit and the Eastern Market Corporation, we are excited to announce today’s winners as well as acknowledge the contributions of all innovators who played a role in shaping the effort. Whether here in Detroit or around the world, the Toyota Mobility Foundation will continue to promote pragmatic solutions to make communities more sustainable, efficient, and functional.”

The Sustainable Cities Challenge is funded by the Toyota Mobility Foundation and conducted in collaboration with Challenge Works and the World Resources Institute. Detroit’s winners illustrate how supporting local innovators can create meaningful impact in communities, with the potential to scale solutions across cities and beyond.

For more information, visit [sustainablecitieschallenge.org](https://sustainablecitieschallenge.org)

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#### Notes to Editors

All the winners are available for interviews. To schedule a time, please contact us at your earliest convenience.

For more information please contact:

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### **About Toyota Mobility Foundation**

[Toyota Mobility Foundation](#) (Chair Akio Toyoda) was established in August 2014 by Toyota Motor Corporation (Toyota) to support the development of a more mobile society in which everyone can move freely. The Foundation underscores Toyota's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and respect for people. It utilizes Toyota's expertise and technologies to support strong mobility systems while eliminating disparities in mobility. TMF works in partnership with universities, governments, non-profits, research institutions and other organizations, creating programs that are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address mobility issues around the world.

"TMF aims to create a truly mobile society that will help people live better lives no matter where they are," said Chair Akio Toyoda.

### **About Challenge Works**

For a decade, Challenge Works has established itself as a global leader in designing and delivering high-impact challenges to incentivize cutting-edge innovation for social good. Challenge Works is a social enterprise founded by the UK's innovation agency Nesta. Over the past decade, Challenge Works has worked on 101 challenge prizes, engaging more than 16,000 innovators and unlocking over £310 million in funding to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges. Challenge Works believes no challenge is unsolvable, partnering with non-profits, governments, and other organizations around the globe to unearth entrepreneurs and their innovations that can solve the greatest challenges of our time. Find out more at <https://challengeworks.org/>

### **About World Resources Institute**

World Resources Institute (WRI) is a global research organization with offices in Brazil, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Mexico and the United States, and regional offices for Africa and Europe. WRI's 1,700 staff work with partners to develop practical solutions that improve people's lives and ensure nature can thrive. Learn more: [WRI.org](http://WRI.org) and on Twitter [@WorldResources](https://twitter.com/WorldResources).

### **About the City of Detroit's Office of Mobility Innovation (OMI)**

The Office of Mobility Innovation (OMI) exists to help the City of Detroit navigate the rapidly changing transportation and mobility industries. Transportation and mobility are essential for both people and businesses, and Detroit's automotive heritage provides an unparalleled opportunity to work with industry to innovate and define their future.

OMI leads mobility advancement efforts on behalf of the City of Detroit and collaborates with industry, academia, philanthropy, and local, state and federal government. By centering residents in every step of the process, OMI is focused on leveraging mobility as a pathway to opportunity in Detroit.

For additional information about OMI, please visit [detroitmi.gov/government/mayors-office/office-mobility-innovation](http://detroitmi.gov/government/mayors-office/office-mobility-innovation) or follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram

### **About Eastern Market**

Eastern Market Partnership is a nonprofit organization that manages and stewards Detroit's historic Eastern Market district—one of the largest and oldest public market districts in the United States. As a 501(c)(3), the organization leads operations, infrastructure development, and programming to strengthen the market as a nationally recognized regional food hub while supporting inclusive economic growth and community development. Through partnerships with local stakeholders, Eastern Market Partnership works to expand access to healthy, affordable food, support small businesses and local producers, and advance initiatives that enhance food systems, sustainability, and equitable development across Detroit and Southeast Michigan.

**About Civilized Cycles**

Civilized Cycles is a Detroit-based design and engineering company redefining the future of commercial cargo transportation. By manufacturing ultra-light, commercial-grade electric vehicles—most notably their patented, modular "Semi-Trike"—Civilized Cycles enables businesses to seamlessly transition away from gas-powered vans. Their technology provides unparalleled cargo capacity, dynamic air suspension, and profound operational cost savings while reducing urban congestion, noise, and carbon emissions.

**About Electricfish Energy Inc.**

ElectricFish Energy Inc. is a distributed energy infrastructure company with an integrated EV charging platform for gas stations, convenience stores, and fleet operators. Its platform includes the latest ElectricFish 400squared™ (battery-integrated fast-chargers), Reef® (CSMS), and Stargazer® (AI optimization) - backed by five, issued U.S. patents.

Founded in 2019, ElectricFish delivers 400 kW charging without costly grid upgrades, enabling deployment in weeks instead of years, and continues to power EVs and site loads even during outages. The company, with offices in San Carlos, California and Detroit, is backed by leading investors, corporates, and government agencies.

**About Neology**

Neology is a Swiss clean energy company developing modular ammonia-to-hydrogen and ammonia-to-power systems for decentralized energy and mobility applications. By leveraging ammonia as a hydrogen carrier, Neology enables scalable, transportable, and cost-efficient hydrogen production for fuel cells, combustion engines, and refueling infrastructure. Its solutions can replace diesel generators in off-grid environments while also supporting hydrogen mobility and industrial decarbonization. Neology is expanding its presence in the United States through deployment initiatives in Detroit.