



Contra Costa County Public Works Department

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Memo

May 24, 2021

TO: Sustainability Committee
Supervisor John Gioia, District I – Chair
Supervisor Federal Glover, District II

FROM: Brian M. Balbas, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: Status Report on EV Implementation in County Fleet

MESSAGE:

With the introduction of more 200+ mile range EVs, such as the Chevy Bolt, range anxiety is less of an obstacle to greater adoption of EVs by County employees. However, the lack of charging stations at County buildings remains a critical challenge to increased purchases of EVs to replace internal combustion engine cars where appropriate.

At the January 28, 2019 Sustainability Committee meeting, staff was directed to develop an electric vehicle charging station installation plan to help advance greater implementation of electric vehicles in the County fleet. That report was updated in January 2021 and identified 92 potential charging stations at various County building sites with a preliminary estimate of approximately \$2.3 million.

Funding for the installation of charging stations has been the greatest challenge. While there are grant opportunities, such as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's *Charge!* Program, and several others, these grants only pay for a portion of the cost and are typically reimbursed after the charging station is installed and in operation. This means the grant applicant has to come up with all the upfront cost first before receiving the grant funding to pay for a portion of the overall costs to construct the charging station.

In the absence of sufficient funding to install charging stations, Public Works has leveraged the limited funds available to strategically invest in make-ready infrastructure by installing conduit to support EV chargers at parking lot canopy solar projects. This advance work takes advantage of construction trenching already happening for the solar project so in many cases the cost of additional conduits placed will significantly reduce the overall cost to install future EV chargers.

Fleet Services is also looking at options of utilizing commercially owned EV chargers that County employees can access to charge a County EV that does not have readily available chargers at the employee's place of work. Our vision is a universal "fuel card" that will allow access to any commercially available EV chargers. As new EV vehicles are purchased with DC fast charger capability, a 15-minute charge session can provide about 100 miles of range which should be adequate for a typical County employee vehicle trip per day.

County employees can find the nearest EV charging station using the [ChargePoint app](#). With the ChargePoint access card that is included with each County EV, the driver can access not only ChargePoint stations but also roaming partner networks such as EVgo and FLO. 511 Contra Costa refers drivers to the [PlugShare app](#) to find chargers.

The Employment and Human Service Department at 4547 Delta Fair Boulevard in Antioch is a recent example of a department willing to utilize EV's even though the building currently does not have EV chargers. After repeated incidents of stolen catalytic converters from their vehicles, EHSD agreed to replace three of their internal combustion engine vehicles with EV's that have 240+ miles range. The nearest Level 2 EV chargers are located at Los Medanos College, about 0.7 miles away or a 13 minute walk and the nearest DC fast charger is located about 7.5 miles away.

Currently, Administrative Bulletin 508.5 directs "Vehicle and equipment purchases shall be operable on available County alternate fuel sources to the greatest extent practicable..." and "Alternate fuel (electric, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), fuel cell, etc.) vehicles shall be procured to the greatest extent." This policy can be amended to include stricter language such as "All new vehicle purchases shall be at minimum hybrid electric and where possible full EV's" and require a more comprehensive questionnaire or process to better assess the driving needs of any new vehicle purchase to determine why a 200+ mile range EV is not acceptable. Any such effort to mandate EV purchases will certainly need the CAO to assist in the implementation and adherence of policy.

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