



City of Palo Alto

COLLEAGUES MEMO

DATE: September 23, 2013

TO: City Council Members

FROM: Council Member Price, Mayor Scharff, Vice Mayor Shepherd

SUBJECT: COLLEAGUE'S MEMO FROM MAYOR SCHARFF, VICE MAYOR SHEPHERD, AND COUNCIL MEMBER PRICE REGARDING ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Recommendation

1. That Council direct staff to review the Electric Vehicle (EV) permit process, and procedures for station installations to streamline the process and insure that it is customer friendly.
2. To also direct staff to adopt code changes requiring that all new construction of single family and multiplex housing install the necessary circuitry for EV chargers.
3. That staff consider ways to encourage and support EV use in the City of Palo Alto and the Bay Area including the following concepts and return to the Policy and Services Committee with recommendations to ensure that Palo Alto is one of the most EV friendly City in America. We would also encourage our colleagues to suggest other recommendations that staff may want to consider. These recommendations shall be based on Staff analysis and may include but are not limited to:
 - 1) Ensuring that all new Hotels are required to install EV charging stations and to the extent feasible that all existing hotels are required to install EV charging stations.
 - 2) That staff review the permitting fee structure for EV charging equipment to reduce costs, or develop cost incentives for the permits in such a way that it is streamlined and efficient.

Finally, as the EV celebration is hosted at Palo Alto City Hall on September 25, 2013, we would like to have it announced that Palo Alto will be a leader in the nation in the installation of EV stations by mandating that all new housing units be required to install the necessary circuitry.

Background

A core principle for Palo Alto is environmental sustainability. Palo Alto's Carbon Neutral Electricity portfolio and a host of other environmental friendly initiatives makes our city one of the greenest cities in America. We presume that Palo Alto also already has one of the highest concentrations of electric vehicle owners in the United States. As

community members and businesses begin to transition from fossil fuel vehicles to electric vehicles, it is important that our ordinances and policies not only support this transition, but also actively encourage it. This policy is particularly timely as we approach our International Building Code update which occurs every three years.

Anecdotally, we have heard from residents that our permitting process and procedures for home electric vehicle charging installation needs to be streamlined and the process made more customer friendly.

Sven Thesen, a Palo Alto resident in Evergreen Park, has contributed to this effort by installing a curbside EV station in front of his residence, making Palo Alto the first city in the nation to have a curbside residential EV "filling station." Based on his observation that this experience of allowing commuters, neighbors and community members to "fill up" at his expense near the California Avenue business district has resulted in new friendships, a hub for EV owners to socialize and now capacity problem. In fact, vehicles are parked there frequently as more drivers purchase and use electric cars and find their way to his "station."

While the changes we are proposing would not extend Sven's curbside demonstration project elsewhere, our proposed changes will make a big difference. Because of the high concentration of Electric vehicles in Palo Alto, the interest of our citizens in Electric vehicles and supporting the environment and fighting climate change we believe that Electric vehicles should be encouraged and supported. Palo Alto is one of the leading cities in environmental sustainability and it is time to review our processes, ordinances, requirements and incentives for installation of EV stations throughout Palo Alto to insure that we encourage and nurture the Electric Vehicle trend.

Staff Impact

Staff reports that the basic code changes should be achievable pretty quickly. The staff review of permitting structures and other policy issues to advance EV will take some time but have been expected improvements to our EV program.