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Comments of Contra Costa County, Department of Conservation and Planning on

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

**Comments of Contra Costa County, Department of Conservation and Planning on
Strategies to Spur Deployment of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure**

July 8, 2016

Introduction

The Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development is pleased to submit these comments to the California Energy Commission (CEC) regarding strategies to deploy charging infrastructure to spur adoption of plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs). Contra Costa County routinely administers grants and loans from the federal government, state government, and private sources to support our mission of providing public services which improve the quality of life of our residents and the economic viability of our businesses. In December 2015, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors adopted a Climate Action Plan¹ to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in the unincorporated areas of the County and from County facilities and operations, and to work collaboratively with the cities and towns in our County in support of their similar goals. A key strategy for Contra Costa County to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to build out alternative-fuel infrastructure, including pursuing funding opportunities to install public EV chargers.

At the June 6, 2016 workshop on *Funding Strategies for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure*, the CEC asked parties to provide input on strategies to deploy charging infrastructure, and the most effective financial incentives and funding mechanisms for various location types and actors. Our comments are based on our experience successfully implementing similar programs, including weatherization and energy efficiency.

Recommendations

Our primary recommendation is to recognize that multiple strategies are required in order to best serve different building types and ownership structures. Related, any strategy will be more successful if it is streamlined and easy for customers to understand and navigate. Sometimes the customer will be an individual, sometimes it will be business or non-profit organization, and sometimes it will be a government entity.

Privately Owned Property

If a building or fleet is privately owned, then the goal is to motivate the property owner to take action to install EV infrastructure. For this purpose, a rebate or voucher will be easy and straightforward for customers to access, regardless of whether the customer is an individual or

¹ See <http://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/39791>

a business. This would apply to many of the location types and actors mentioned at the workshop, including workplaces, multi-unit dwellings, fleets, and destinations.

In our experience, both as an administrator and implementer of programs, and as a (large) customer, competitive processes and solicitations are more complex to access. They also introduce an element of uncertainty as to whether the funds will ultimately be available. The customer then determines whether the upside of receiving the funds is outweighed by the investment in the solicitation process and subsequent reporting requirements. If the CEC's goal is widespread deployment of EV infrastructure, it should focus on known strategies that make it easy for customers to take action.

Publicly Owned Property

Publicly owned property can include workplaces, multi-unit dwellings, fleets, and destinations. Indeed, sometimes one public entity can own and operate all these types of properties. The CEC should again think about what will best motivate public entities to take action to install EV infrastructure. In the case of public entities, we suggest that formula grants are most effective and easiest to access. If we as a County know how the amount and timing of funding, we can prioritize our deployment of EV infrastructure according to local needs and priorities.

Public projects provide great opportunity for planning and collaboration. It would be helpful for public entities to be able to leverage CEC grants with other funding sources. For example, in November, Contra Costa County voters will consider approval of a transportation sales tax that would, among other things, raise funds for innovative transportation technology, including expanded opportunities for zero emission vehicle charging.² We would like to be able to work with our local sister agency to determine how we can best use funds from multiple sources to deploy EV charging infrastructure to meet the needs of our county.

Disadvantaged Communities

We appreciate the CEC's focus on ensuring EV technology is available to disadvantaged communities. As stated above, it will be important to consider what will most motivate customers in these areas to take the desired action, identify partners who may be able to assist, and use a simple vehicle to deploy funds.

² Contra Costa Transportation Authority, *Transforming Contra Costa County: Our New 30-Year Transportation Expenditure Plan*, May 19, 2016.

Conclusion

Contra Costa County is ready to partner with the CEC to bring more EV charging infrastructure to our residents and businesses. We recommend the CEC approach this from the customer perspective, and focus on rebates and grants, which are easier to access and administer.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/

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