

ITEM #: 2  
DATE: 09-03-24  
DEPT: ELEC

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT:**

**CHARGING AND FUELING INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FOR LEVEL 3  
ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS**

**BACKGROUND:**

Electric Services is requesting approval to participate in an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration for the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Grant Program. The application is in partnership with the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (DMAMPO), which is leading a group effort of more than a dozen area city and county governments. Membership in the DMAMPO is not required to participate in the application.

The CFI Grant Program offers up to an 80% federal funding match to strategically deploy publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. This program is a portion of the funding available from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Electric Services currently owns and operates 20 electric vehicle chargers at 10 locations throughout Ames. Nine locations offer Level 2 charging at similar speeds to what customers can install at their home or business. These destination chargers can take up to 8 hours to fully charge a vehicle, starting with an empty battery. They are meant to serve customers looking to “top off” their vehicle or maintain a full charge as they travel locally.

Ames also operates a location with two Level 3 fast chargers that can charge vehicles at speeds up to up to 125 kW, more than 15 times faster than Level 2 stations. These chargers can bring a vehicle battery, depending on the model from a 20% to an 80% charge in 30-40 minutes. Of the charging stations in the Ames fleet, the Level 3 fast chargers are the most utilized, representing close to 2/3 of the energy sold for EV charging. Level 3 electric vehicle chargers are best suited to meet the needs of highway travelers, and fast charging is needed for customers to feel comfortable relying on an all-electric vehicle for longer trips and commutes.

**Ames’s portion of the grant request is in support of six Level 3 charging stations installed on city-owned right-of-way located at 1910 Green Hills Drive. This property is east of University Blvd., just south of Highway 30 (see attached sketch).** The proposed stations would each be able to independently charge at speeds of 150kW or greater. This results in faster charging times than Ames’s existing fast chargers, which can only reach a combined peak output of 125 kW. The proposed location would bring faster charging speeds to the southwest side of Ames and be able to serve much of the traffic near the main entrance to Iowa State University.

The total project cost to develop the six-station charging facility is estimated to be \$1,400,000. The federal match from the grant would cover \$1,120,000 of this amount, and the City would be responsible for a 20% cost share of \$280,000. The adopted 2024-2029 Capital Improvements Plan contains \$150,000 from Electric Utility funds in FY 2024/25 for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure. Additionally, \$311,611 of unused EV Charging funds from prior years has been carried forward, resulting in a balance of \$461,611 available as matching funds for this grant.

The installation of these additional fast chargers will help support the City Council's Climate Action Plan goal for carbon reduction.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve a resolution in support of the regional joint application for funding from the Federal Highway Administration's Charging & Fueling Infrastructure discretionary Grant Program for the site at 1910 Green Hills Dr. and commit up to \$280,000 from Electric Utility funds to cover City's cost share portion.
2. Do not participate in the grant application.

**CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

This grant application, if approved, will provide up to 80% in federal matching funds to support electric vehicle infrastructure. Pursuing this grant will commit the City to provide 20% matching funds towards the project, up to \$280,000, given a successful grant application. The proposed charging infrastructure will be owned by Electric Services and provide electric vehicle charging for the Ames community and visitors traveling to Ames on Highway 30 and Interstate 35. Expanded charging infrastructure is expected to encourage further purchase of electric vehicles, which have no direct emissions and reduce indirect carbon emissions compared to gasoline-powered vehicles. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as stated above.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

[EV Charger Site Layout.pdf](#)