



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: March 24, 2025
To: Mayor and Council
From: Audrey Pascual, Deputy Clerk
Report Number: COU25-026
Attachments: None

Title: Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program Contribution Agreement

Objective: To seek Council approval for entering into the Contribution Agreement between The Corporation of the City of Stratford and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) for the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP) and, to authorize the use of the Parking Reserve Fund to fund the City's portion of the project costs.

Background: In 2022, the City of Stratford was successful in applying for funding to install new EV Charging Stations under the ZEVIP with NRCan. The City's Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station Expansion Project included the installation of eleven (11) dual port Level 2 charging stations and one (1) Level 3 Direct Current Fast Charger (DCFC) at municipal lots in the downtown core. The project was completed in January 2025.

In July 2024, NRCan announced the launch of the new round of ZEVIP applications. The program will support the deployment of EV Chargers, including Level 3 fast chargers, in public places across Canada with the aim of making EV charging infrastructure accessible for Canadians from coast to coast.

Following Council approval at its September 9, 2024 meeting, staff applied for ZEVIP funding for the installation of four (4) Level 3 EV Charging Stations at the Rotary Complex.

Analysis: The City submitted its application under ZEVIP's Community Public EV Charging Infrastructure stream. Eligible projects under this stream must increase the number of public EV chargers in the community and must include the installation of a minimum of two (2) Level 3 EV Charging Stations (fast chargers) available for use 24/7 or at least as frequently as the operating hours of the site. The City's application is for the installation of four (4) Level 3 EV Charging Stations at the Rotary Complex. The Rotary Complex was selected as the site for the chargers given the significant and wide

variety of uses of the facility. At peak times under current services, staff estimate that 2,000 people attend the Rotary Complex on a weekly basis. The Rotary Complex is also the site of regional events including the Canadian Dairy Expo and the Ontario Pork Congress. Installation of EV chargers in this facility can potentially draw greater numbers of EV drivers to the area, reduce range anxiety for EV drivers, meet the community's anticipated infrastructure needs, and help fill in the gap in the City's as well as the regional EV network, especially for Level 3 fast charging stations.

The City of Stratford was successful in its ZEVIP application and is eligible to receive \$200,000 towards the project costs. The total project costs for the installation of four (4) Level 3 Charging Stations is \$515,700 which includes capital equipment, construction and overhead costs. Construction costs are significantly higher in comparison with the costs of the Level 2 charging station installation due to the connection requirements of Level 3 charging stations as well as the site preparation work that needs to be completed. Therefore, the City's portion of the project costs will be \$315,700. Staff are recommending that this be funded through the Parking Reserve Fund, which contains sufficient uncommitted funds for this project.

A five-year subscription for a Cloud Plan and an Assure Plan is included in the initial purchase of the EV chargers. The 'Cloud Plan' is required and is utilized for the management of the stations and offers access to a real time data dashboard that displays several metrics including periodic usage of stations, both live and historical, and identifies when there are issues present with the machine. The 'Assure Plan' covers all maintenance and parts replacement for the EV chargers for the period. At the end of the five-year plan, the subscription costs will be included in the divisional operating budgets with the expectation that revenues would offset some or all these costs.

In 2024, the City also applied under the Ministry of Transportation's EV ChargeON Program for this project, with the intention of stacking the two funding sources, but was not successful.

One new requirement for the ZEVIP funding is that the electric chargers purchased for the project must be manufactured in countries that have a Free Trade Agreement in force with Canada. This requirement was initially not included when the funding was first announced by NRCan and was introduced prior to the closing of the applications. The supplier for the EV charging stations the City has is US based. Staff have also received confirmation from the supplier that their equipment are manufactured and recognized as Products of Mexico and will meet the requirement. Consideration was given to determine compatibility or options for another supplier, however changing to another source at this stage would likely increase costs and will require the maintenance of two separate systems.

Another requirement for the funding is for charging stations to be publicly accessible 24 hours per day, 7 days a week or at least as frequently as the site's operating hours. Prior to the opening of the stations, staff intend to bring an amendment to the Traffic

and Parking By-law to permit overnight parking for electric vehicles intending to access the Level 3 chargers at the Rotary Complex to fulfill this requirement. Associated user fees are also being assessed and will form part of this report.

As per the contribution agreement, the project must be completed with the stations fully available for public use within thirty months (30) following the execution of the agreement. The project completion date is expected to be November 2026 with construction to begin by fall of 2025.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There is no expected impact to the current year operating budget as this project is proposed to be funded from the Parking Reserve Fund. The five-year subscription and maintenance warranties will be a 'prepaid' expense for the City and recognized in each of the operating years.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

The five-year subscription and maintenance warranties will be a 'prepaid' expense for the City and recognized in each of the operating years. At the end of the five-year plan, the operating costs for all four chargers will be approximately \$16,700 for a five-year Cloud Plan and \$63,400 for a five-year Assure Plan. The City can also opt out of the Assure Plan (maintenance) and pay for individual service calls.

Link to asset management plan and strategy:

As with all City infrastructure, these assets become part of the City's asset inventory, requiring periodic maintenance, and replacement at the end of useful life (estimated at 10-15 years). This future capital cost becomes part of the replacement and funding strategy and form part of the 10-year forecast.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Enhance our Infrastructure

This initiative aligns with this strategic priority as its recommendations promote the enhancement of alternative transportation infrastructure and support energy transition to low-carbon sources, through the development of EV Charging networks, which will significantly contribute to emission reductions and support sustainable growth.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Travel and Transport

Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport.

Staff Recommendation: THAT Council authorize the entering into of the Contribution Agreement between The Corporation of the City of Stratford and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) for the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP);

THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the Contribution Agreement;

AND THAT the Parking Reserve Fund be used to fund the City's portion of the project costs.

Prepared by: Audrey Pascual, Deputy Clerk

Recommended by: Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer