



December 1, 2023

**Re: 12.4.23 - T&E Committee Agenda Item (d)2: Electric Vehicle Fleet and Charging Infrastructure Workplan comments**

Honorable Chair David Cohen and Members of the Transportation and Environment Committee:

We are San José Community Energy Advocates, a volunteer community group that advocates for renewable energy and reducing GHGs, and Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley, a grassroots group of volunteers advocating for a livable climate for all children. Together, we represent over 2000 South Bay residents, the majority of whom live in San José.

We are pleased to read in the staff memorandum (“Memorandum”) for this agenda item about the Fleet Electrification Master Plan (“Master Plan”) in progress; the plans to increase charging infrastructure for both the City’s fleet and the community; and opportunities to take advantage of federal dollars for vehicle electrification and chargers. The Memorandum rightly highlights the equity concerns that low-income households and renters face barriers to installing charging at their homes and have little access to public charging infrastructure. Furthermore, the Memorandum recognizes that increasing the use of EVs, while important, will not address the challenges of gridlock or traffic safety.

We have the following comments and recommendation regarding the Memorandum:

1. We understand that staff are still in the process of updating the City’s Council’s 2007 Green Fleet policy. Given the delayed progress over the past four years, **we recommend that staff provide the City Council a target date of completion.** Furthermore, the updated policy should adapt the process for purchasing City-owned vehicles to maximize the purchase of light, medium and heavy-duty electric vehicles. This is not only climate smart but also fiscally prudent, considering that the federal 2022 Inflation Reduction Act allows municipalities to receive the \$7,500 EV tax credit in direct pay, given that municipalities do not pay taxes.<sup>1</sup>
2. According to the Memorandum, of the 2,100 San Jose fleet vehicles, 250 are all-electric or hybrid. We asked staff for the number of all-electric vehicles. Per staff communication to us, the fleet has 130 light-duty all-electric vehicles and 10 full BEV (battery electric vehicle) Shuttle Buses. **We recommend that the updated Green Fleet Policy directive require that annual reports to the City Council list separately the number of all-electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid vehicles, and conventional hybrids given that hybrids are not zero-emissions vehicles (ZEVs).** Furthermore, **annual reports to the City Council should list vehicles purchased that are not ZEVs and note the reason why.**

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<sup>1</sup> [Direct Pay | Clean Energy | The White House](#)

3. The Memorandum describes the progress on the Fleet Electrification Master Plan that will be issued in Q2 calendar year 2024 to include compliance with the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) rule. However, the Memorandum does not inform that **a compliance report regarding the ACF to CARB is due on April 1, 2024**. Furthermore, given that the ACF only addresses medium and heavy-duty vehicles, **we expect and request that the Master Plan also address cars and light-duty trucks**. Given San Jose's goal to achieve net zero by 2030, it is important for San Jose to be as aggressive as possible in transitioning to an all-electric fleet.
4. The 2023-24 operating budget shows the fleet replacement budget was proposed for \$8 million and the adopted budget is \$18 million.<sup>2</sup> In the annual November report required by the current Green Fleet Policy, **staff should report in 2024 on how the 2023-24 fleet budget dollars increased electrification of the fleet**. We assume the \$10 million increase in the adopted budget relates to SJCE California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project (CALeVIP) investment with the California Energy Commission.
5. With respect to the Memorandum's second priority regarding charging infrastructure, staff performed an analysis in the September 2019 California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project Funding memorandum to the City Council referenced in the Memorandum. The 2019 memorandum identified the needs for the Climate Smart 2025 goals of 5,409 Level 2 charging ports and 258 DCFC ports to service 63,100 EVs.<sup>3</sup> Given that multi-family homes present their own unique set of challenges, especially in low-income areas, we recommend that the Master Plan identify the number of multi-family homes in low-income areas that lack charging infrastructure. Staff should prioritize the installation of Low-Power Level 2 chargers there (which add about 100 miles of range over 10 hours, more than adequate for the average driver who drives 38 miles/day), to give these residents access to the most desirable location to charge. People who are visiting San José from out of town will need some public DCFC stations, but San José residents need and deserve at-home charging, the most convenient and affordable place to charge, and not have to rely on DCFC for their regular charging needs (especially because regular charging at DCFC degrades battery life).
6. **Given that by 2035, California residents won't be able to purchase a new vehicle in the state that isn't zero emissions, we recommend that Staff develop a comprehensive plan with metrics to chart a course to achieving 100% EV Ready charging access for all residents before 2035.**

We also note that in 2007 when the current Green Policy was enacted, there were no new electric vehicles for purchase, and now there are over 80 models of EVs. Many of these have a range of around 300 miles, at similar prices as gas-powered cars when the IRA direct-pay incentive is used—and are less expensive to maintain over the lifetime of the vehicle. At Direct Current Fast Charging stations, some EVs can charge to 80% in less than 20 minutes and many within 30 minutes. These new developments mean that EVs can charge very quickly. Although neither the Green Fleet Policy or the ACF requirements include public safety vehicles, San Jose received three new Mach-E police cars this year. These patrol units can fully charge at the beginning of a shift, and if necessary, quickly charge during a shift. As noted in the

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<sup>2</sup> [Public Works Department Fleet Budget.pdf](#) PDF page 9

<sup>3</sup> [19-944 - Memorandum \(legistar.com\)](#)

Memorandum, compliance with the CARB rule helps ensure that zero-emission vehicles are brought to market. A CARB fact sheet indicates that in regards to **zero-emission truck availability** (as of July 2022): 148 models in North America are available for order or pre-order; 135 models are actively being produced and delivered to customers and at least 35 manufacturers are producing vehicle Class 2b through 8 ZEVs.<sup>4</sup>

We recognize that the City of San Jose faces budget constraints. Other constraints are EV availability especially for specialized vehicles. However, many new types of EVs are available and prices for EVs have declined—in many cases they are less expensive than gas-powered cars in total cost of ownership due to much lower maintenance and fuel costs. Furthermore, we reiterate that the Inflation Reduction Act allows municipalities to use the direct pay EV tax credit. Also, other jurisdictions are moving forward with aggressive EV fleet policies. For example, the Zero-Emissions Vehicles for New York City Act (ZEV4NYC) approved on September 28, 2023, requires NYC to begin purchasing only light and medium duty ZEVs in beginning in July 2025, and heavy-duty ZEVs in July 2028, both with certain exceptions.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Madison, Wisconsin, with a population a third of the size of San Jose, already has a fleet of 100 EVs with 40 more already ordered, about the same number as San Jose.<sup>6</sup>

Staff is doing great work on the Master Plan. However, it's past time to update the Green Fleet policy and aggressively increase the number of light, medium and heavy-duty electric vehicles in our City fleet in order to significantly reduce the GHG emissions that San Jose has direct control over. San Jose needs to continue to be a leader in the climate crisis fight. Both locally and globally, climate impacts are causing widespread devastation. Just two months ago, San Jose experienced several days of unhealthy air quality from the wildfires in Northern California and Oregon. In September, Spain, Greece and Libya experienced catastrophic flooding, which killed thousands of people, while the devastating August wildfires in Maui killed hundreds. And on September 30, New York City received two inches of rain in one hour, resulting in widespread flooding.

Just as San José Community Energy Advocates and Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley successfully advocated for and continue to support San José Clean Energy, we look forward to supporting a Green Fleet Policy update and the Fleet Electrification Master Plan next year.

Sincerely,



*Linda Hutchins-Knowles*

Ruth Merino, Chair

Linda Hutchins-Knowles, Co-Founder and Team Coordinator

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<sup>4</sup> [Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation Summary | California Air Resources Board](#)

<sup>5</sup> [The New York City Council - File #: T2023-3458 \(nyc.gov\)](#) and [Sierra Club-UCS Advocacy Letter to Mayor Adams re ZEV for NYC Act, June 22, 2023](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Wisconsin Municipality Reaches Milestone With 100th EV - Green Fleet - Government Fleet \(government-fleet.com\)](#) and [Madison, WI Population by Year - 2023 Statistics, Facts & Trends - Neilsberg](#)