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EEP 24-25

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024

SUBJECT **Increasing Direct-Current Fast-Charge/Level 3 Chargers in the Region**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To report back on the potential to increase the number of direct-current fast-charge (DCFC)/ Level 3 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging ports as part of the Capital Regional District (CRD) Public Electric Charging Network Project funded by Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Clean BC Communities Fund (ICIP-CCF).

BACKGROUND

The CRD EV Infrastructure Roadmap (2021) identifies key roles for the CRD in supporting the electrification of transportation, including to:

- pursue regional infrastructure funding
- support planning and coordination onsite selection
- engage with BC Hydro on infrastructure planning

On February 14, 2024, staff were directed by the Board to enter into a shared-cost agreement and begin implementing the CRD Public Electric Charging Network Project, funded by ICIP-CCF. This project has now been publicly announced and will support the installation of approximately 576 Level 2 and 20 DCFC EV charging ports in approximately 80 public locations across the capital region. The CRD is undertaking regional coordination and close partnerships with local governments in the region, including the City of Victoria, which will manage up to 424 of the Level 2 and all 20 of the DCFCs planned under this project.

Upon signing of the funding agreement, staff were also to explore the potential to increase the number of DCFC ports as part of this program funding and report back. While it has been confirmed that there is no opportunity to increase the number of DCFC ports as part of the CRD Public Electric Charging Network Project due to significant capital and operational cost requirements to support DCFC ports, staff are actively working with BC Hydro to identify and facilitate site selections for public DCFC installations across the region.

In August 2023, the CRD Climate Action service entered into a memorandum of understanding agreement (MOU) with the EV Charging Infrastructure team at BC Hydro. This MOU commits the CRD and BC Hydro to build on our existing working relationship and to explore and undertake a variety of transportation electrification initiatives. BC Hydro has a provincial mandate to install over three thousand DCFC ports across the province by 2030 to support electrification of transportation.

To date, the primary initiative under this MOU has been to advance BC Hydro built, branded, owned and operated public DCFC EV charging hubs on CRD property, and on public and/or private property. Staff have been leveraging regional coordination and partnerships with local governments and property owners in the region to identify sites, coordinate introductions and to support feasibility analysis to increase the number of DCFC chargers in the region.

Sites that are eligible for consideration must have appropriate parking space to support a minimum of four DCFC ports in rural areas and a minimum of eight DCFC ports in urban areas. Level 2 chargers may be included in the site design as well. These sites should be appropriately lighted, have clear lines of sight from the road, be publicly accessible, and be located near amenities for public use. The property can be publicly or privately owned, so long as the owner is willing to enter into a 10-year license of occupation agreement with BC Hydro to host the charging infrastructure. To prevent monopoly, BC Hydro is limited to a certain number of charging hub sites in each municipality, calculated by population. These limits are set by the Province.

To date, seven potential DCFC charging sites in the Core, Saanich Peninsula, Salt Spring Island and West Shore sub-regions have been identified. Notably, the City of Colwood has entered into an agreement with BC Hydro to install 12 DCFC ports and eight Level 2 ports at the Colwood Park and Ride. This site is currently in the detailed design stage and it is anticipated for the first phase to be built by the end of 2024. Two other sites in Sooke and on Salt Spring Island for four DCFC ports each have also reached the signed agreement stage and are entering into detailed design. All other sites are at varying stages of feasibility and design work to determine eligibility by BC Hydro and site hosts. Capital and operational costs of charging infrastructure installed under this program will be fully funded by BC Hydro. Charging infrastructure will be the property of BC Hydro, including any associated operating revenue and costs.

CONCLUSION

The CRD has entered into a shared-cost agreement with Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Clean BC Communities Fund for the CRD Public Electric Charging Network Project to fund the installation of 576 Level 2 charging ports and 20 direct-current fast-charge (DCFC) ports across the region. CRD staff are actively working with BC Hydro Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure staff to identify potential sites for additional DCFC infrastructure, with seven sites at various stages of feasibility and design work.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

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