



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, May 13, 2025
TO: CITY COUNCIL
WRITTEN BY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS MANAGER VU-DUC
RECOMMENDED BY: PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR LINDBERG
APPROVED BY: TAMARA VIDES, CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: INTRODUCE FOR FIRST READING ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGER PARKING ORDINANCE

RECOMMENDATION:

Introduce for first reading only, waiving full reading of the text, the “Electric Vehicle Charger Parking Ordinance,” which adds Article 1021 to Chapter 5 “Traffic” of Title 4 “Public Safety” to the Watsonville Municipal Code.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Watsonville’s Climate Action & Adaptation Plan committed the City to increase public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations as part of Measure T7: EV Expansion. The City has subsequently installed publicly accessible EV chargers in 18 parking spaces across 4 public sites:

1. Airport at 100 Aviation Way
2. City Hall at 250 Main Street
3. Civic Plaza at 275 Main Street and
4. Romo Park at 349 Main Street, opposite the downtown City Plaza.

The parking spaces at the public sites listed above provide physical space for EVs to refuel utilizing the nearby chargers. Despite signage prioritizing these parking spaces for the active fueling of EVs, there is no legal framework in place to enable parking enforcement. This lack of enforcement leads to non-electric vehicles and EVs which are not actively charging occupying parking spaces prioritized for EV charging only.

DISCUSSION:

As EV use increases and the City continues to expand public access to EV charging infrastructure, the importance of parking enforcement for the EV charger network also grows. EV parking enforcement supports an equitable transition to EVs for communities unable to refuel EVs at home or work and ensures higher utilization of EV infrastructure investments. Greater usage of the City’s EV chargers in turn generates revenue for the City through the collection of Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) credits, which has generated roughly \$2,750 since December 2022.

For these reasons, staff from Public Works & Utilities, Police, and the City Attorney’s office collaborated to and prepare this ordinance, which draws from established EV parking practices in neighboring municipalities and State trends while tailoring for Watsonville’s specific needs. The ordinance as drafted provides the regulations necessary to enforce the City’s network of existing off-street EV charger parking while also incorporating a forward-thinking approach to provide for potential future on-street EV charging infrastructure.

The EV Parking Ordinance recommended for adoption would amend the Municipal Code and be codified alongside other parking guidance in Chapter 5 “Traffic” of Title 4 “Public Safety.” The ordinance—if adopted—will be enforced as per standard parking violation protocols.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) DETERMINATION:

Adoption of a municipal parking ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). This action is not a project within the meaning of the CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it has no potential for physical effects on the environment.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Adoption of the EV Charger Parking Ordinance supports the following Strategic Plan priorities:

Infrastructure & Environment

Public Safety

Efficient and Well-performing Government

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The ordinance focuses on enforcement ability and proposes no additional fines or fees outside standard parking violation protocols. Implementation includes a one-time additional cost for signage at existing EV charging sites, which is estimated at \$1,000.00, to be paid from the Environmental & Sustainability Infrastructure budget. Signage cost for future EV charging sites will be funded as part of any new infrastructure installation project(s).

Maintenance for this signage and City-owned EV chargers is funded by two revenue streams:

1. EV charging rates of \$0.50/hr for the first 4 hours and \$5.00/hr beyond 4 hours on top of the \$0.22/kWh fueled (Resolution No. 87-22); and
2. Low Carbon Fuel Standard credit sales, which are generated by the sale of electricity as fuel through City-owned EV chargers under a program to incentivize clean fuel options managed by the California Air Resources Board.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

No reasonable alternatives are known at this time.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (IF ANY):

None.