Potential Issues to Explore in a Request for Information (RFI) or a Vendor Meeting

EV Advisory Commission Discussion Document (September 15, 2025)

Doing an RFI or a vendor meeting is a way to increase vendor awareness of our pending Request for Proposals (RFP) to select a charging station vendor. It is also an opportunity to get vendor insights into some of our ideas prior to finalizing the RFP.

Context

The primary goal of Charge Up Dane County is to expand affordable EV charging in areas that currently lack access to affordable charging. Our secondary goal is to implement this grant in a way that builds local capacity.

Because our goal is affordability, our focus is on Level 2 charging, not fast charging. We expect most of our 60-70 sites to be in multi-family neighborhoods across the County though there will be a few rural installations and a few multi-modal installations as well. Our plan is to issue an RFP to procure chargers along with a five-year O&M plan. Our model is one where the site hosts will own the chargers and be responsible for setting and collecting charging fees, electricity payments, state taxes, data reporting, etc. OECC will work with site hosts to assist them in setting charging rates and OECC will coordinate the data reporting to federal funders required under the CFI grant.

We see multiple opportunities for capacity building:

- Households without access to electrified private parking will have a viable path to owning an EV because there will be affordable charging near their home
- Site hosts will get EV charging infrastructure installed at their locations, increasing the value of their site and facilitating permanent EV infrastructure across our communities
- The construction and maintenance of these 60-70 sites can create new workforce training opportunities for people interested in pursuing a career in this field

It's our vision that Charge Up Dane County will make EVs viable for all residents in Dane County and we look forward to working with an EV charging station vendor that shares that goal.

Possible Questions

1. The CFI funding details specific requirements for charging station hardware and software. Are there any CFI requirements that are more complicated to fulfill? Anything you recommend we pay particular attention to during our procurement?

2. Under CFI we need to install EV charging that is at least 6 kW but we have the option to choose a faster Level 2 option. Insofar as we expect most of this affordable charging to be overnight charging in neighborhoods, what kW level would you recommend?

3. Our approach is to transfer ownership to site hosts as soon as sites are constructed. This creates a slight burden for hosts relative to site management but it also creates a permanent asset in the community. Are there lessons learned from elsewhere that we should consider in pursuing this strategy?

4. Our potential site hosts range from public entities like local governments and school districts to private businesses, faith-based organizations and not-for-profit groups. Most of them have little or no experience hosting EV charging so the potential site hosts have questions about insuring the chargers, snow maintenance and other logistics. Are there resources we should be leveraging to help these entities prepare for hosting EV charging infrastructure?

5. Some of our site hosts have questions about what might happen at the end of the five-year O&M contract. We have said that, anticipating an increasingly robust EV market, site hosts are likely to have several options, including renewing an O&M agreement with the existing vendor, or opting to upgrade equipment via the existing vendor or a new vendor. Do you have anything else you'd say to those site hosts?

6. We understand that the O&M support provided by some vendors is centrally located, which creates few opportunities for local workforce development. We are likely to give preference to vendors who will commit to partnering with one or more local vendors to expand the local workforce development opportunities associated with O&M activities, especially on-site maintenance requirements. Are there things we should take into consideration when prioritizing local workforce development?

7. Because Dane County has been an early adopter of EVs, current EV owners complain that some EV platforms list inoperable or even no-longer-existing charging stations, which leads to user frustration with the network. We are interested in exploring how we might ensure that our Charge Up Dane County chargers communicate charger availability in real time via a variety of EV driver platforms ranging from AFDC-fed applications and proprietary platforms to PlugShare and even Google Maps. What thoughts can you share on the viability of this?

8. Please share any other observations as we look to prepare our RFP.