

Reference Committee Report



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| To: | Infrastructure and Community Investment Committee |
| Subject | Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment Management |
| Ward(s) | All |
| Date | November 19, 2025 |
| Department Head Approval | R. Pews, Director of Corporate Facilities |
| Executive Management Approval | J. Schmidt, General Manager of Community and Corporate Services |
| CAO Approval: | M. Prowse, Chief Administrative Officer |

Recommendation(s):

1. That the Director of Corporate Facilities issue a request for proposals and be authorized to enter into an agreement with the successful third-party turnkey service provider for the replacement and upgrade of the current downtown Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) under the following general parameters, and with terms subject to approval by the Director of Legal Services and the Director of Transit and Parking Strategy:
 - a) The third-party turnkey service provider would be responsible for the provision and installation of replacement and/or upgraded existing EVSE in the downtown with universal charging stations, at no cost to the City;
 - b) The third-party turnkey service provider would be responsible for management of operational aspects related to the EVSE including maintenance, client services, as well as setting, collecting, and overseeing fee and charging services;
 - c) The third-party turnkey service provider would be responsible for maintenance and other operating costs associated with the equipment;
 - d) The third-party turnkey service provider would be responsible for decisions related to the number and location of EVSE, in consultation with the City; and

- e) The agreement would, where appropriate, align with the provisions of the City's existing EVSE contracts, and confirm that:
 - i. The City retains the right to expand, add, or remove EVSE, utilizing grant funding where available;
 - ii. The service provider has first right of refusal for integrating any new charging stations at covered locations;
 - iii. The City retains ownership of all auxiliary EVSE infrastructure, excluding the charging stations; and
 - iv. An annual cap on price increases will be established for the contract term.
 2. That should the procurement be unsuccessful, Staff include alternative services options for consideration within the 2027 business plan.
 3. That the Director of Corporate Facilities be authorized to amend the agreement with the turnkey service provider and the existing agreement with Alectra Services Inc., as necessary, to support the evolving needs of the electric vehicle infrastructure program. This may include, but is not limited to, the addition or removal of electric vehicle supply equipment, and adjustments to the scope, terms, or conditions of the agreements to ensure continued alignment with operational requirements and strategic objectives.
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Executive Summary:

This staff report serves as a follow-up to report FAC001-24, as requested by Council, to provide further analysis and information on future opportunities for the replacement, management, and operation of the downtown and marina electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE). Staff continue to recommend moving forward with the procurement of a third-party turnkey service model to renew and manage this non-core municipal service.

Key Findings:

The current public downtown and marina EVSE is outdated and nearing the end of its lifecycle, necessitating investment for renewal to modernize the service and implement a system for charging users. There are three options available to modernize the existing downtown EVSE infrastructure:

- City Owned & Operated
- Third Party Turnkey Service Model
- Shared Ownership Model

The business case for renewing, managing, and operating Level 2 charging station infrastructure is constrained. Utilization of public Level 2 charging stations remains low, as most EV owners prefer charging at home while operational costs—particularly those related to vandalism, maintenance, and electricity—significantly hinder the potential to generate a return on investment.

A shared ownership model or a fully City-operated model would require substantial capital investment and ongoing operational resources to support staffing and maintenance. Currently, the City does not have dedicated internal resources to support this service, which would necessitate the creation of new roles and infrastructure. These approaches also expose the City to financial risks stemming from escalating costs related to vandalism and volatility in electric commodity pricing. In contrast, outsourcing through the Third-Party Turnkey Service Model helps mitigate these risks by transferring operational and financial responsibilities to a specialized provider. This model not only reduces the need for internal resource development but also offers the greatest financial advantage for the City while enhancing existing service levels.

Council raised several questions and inquiries regarding Staff's previous recommendation to proceed with a turnkey service provider. These questions focused on the agreement's provisions governing the partnership with the third-party provider. The anticipated contract is expected to align with the existing agreement with Alectra, which oversees the EVSE at the City's recreation centres. Key provisions of the proposed contract include:

- The City will retain the right to expand and add EVSE and utilize available grant funding to support such initiatives.
- The City will maintain final authority over the removal of any EVSE at the locations covered by the agreement.
- For locations included in the agreement, the City may choose to add charging stations, granting the provider the first right of refusal to incorporate these additional assets into the partnership.
- The City will retain ownership of all auxiliary infrastructure associated with the EVSE, excluding the charging stations themselves.
- Price escalator provisions will be included, setting an annual cap on price increases over the contract term.

Staff recommend establishing a partnership with a third-party service provider to rejuvenate the City's downtown and Marina EVSE infrastructure. The turnkey service model is designed to mirror the current arrangement with Alectra for the recreation facility charge stations, involving the management of operational aspects, maintenance, client services, as well as overseeing fee and charging services. The existing Alectra turnkey agreement incurs no capital or ongoing operating costs for the City. Alectra and other vendors would be able to submit proposals for this opportunity.

Financial Implications:

Partnering with a no-cost third-party turnkey service provider offers the City significant financial relief, including the following:

- **Deferral** of an estimated **\$180,000** in capital costs required to replace and upgrade aging EVSE infrastructure within the next five years.
- **Elimination** of **\$30,000 - \$40,000** in annual utility costs, which have risen sharply due to increased usage and hydro rate inflation—costs that are expected to continue escalating.
- **Eliminates** approximately **\$26,500** in annual maintenance costs, including costs related to vandalism, service troubleshooting, and equipment repairs.

While opting out of a City-owned EVSE program does forgo the potential to generate revenue through charging fees, the financial implications extend beyond lost income. One of the most significant factors influencing the business case is the disparity in capital expenditures. Third-party vendors typically benefit from substantially lower upfront costs due to economies of scale, and vertically integrated supply chains. In contrast, municipal ownership often entails higher capital investment, longer procurement timelines, and increased administrative overhead. These differences can make third-party ownership a more financially viable and scalable solution, especially when considering long-term maintenance, operational efficiency, and risk mitigation.

Alternatives:

The following alternatives are available for consideration by Infrastructure and Community Investment Committee:

Alternative #1 Infrastructure and Community Investment Committee could choose not to proceed with a third-party partnership option and maintain the status quo. This alternative is not recommended as it would not address the operational issues identified by the public and will not maximize the utilization of the downtown area EVSE

Alternative #2 Infrastructure and Community Investment Committee may consider recommending that the City proceed with renewing and upgrading its EVSE infrastructure, with operations and service management retained in-house.

While this alternative remains available, it would require substantial capital investment and ongoing operational resources. The associated costs produce a weak business case, as the revenue generated from user charging fees is insufficient to provide a reasonable return on investment or to offset the long-term capital and operational expenditures over the infrastructure's lifecycle.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

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| Infrastructure Investments | X | The recommended approach facilitates both the renewal and enhancement of the City's EVSE infrastructure, while also improving the quality, reliability, and accessibility of service for users who rely on public charging stations. |
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| Responsible Governance | X | The recommended approach alleviates the financial and operational burden associated with delivering EVSE services, while also insulating the City from the risks inherent in directly owning and managing charging infrastructure. |
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Additional Background Information and Analysis:

Public EV charging infrastructure was first introduced in 2016 in the downtown and Marina areas. Since then, Council has passed several motions and staff have undertaken multiple initiatives to guide the deployment, management, and use of EVSE. Key milestones include:

- 2016 – Free Charging Policy: Council approved Motion 16-G-306, requiring all City-installed Level 2 EV chargers to provide free charging. Users pay standard parking fees in paid lots, but no fee for electricity.
- 2017 – Downtown EVSE Expansion: Motion 17-G-285 authorized the installation of 54 public charging stations downtown at no capital cost to the City. Stations were placed at Collier Street Parkade, Downtown Library, Heritage Park, and the Marina.
- 2020 – Policy Alignment & Parking Fee Waiver: Motion 20-G-082 formalized the City’s EVSE approach to align with Bill 123 (Highway Traffic Act changes for EV parking). As part of its COVID-19 response, the City temporarily waived parking fees for electric vehicle stalls at the Collier Street Parkade during a designated trial period
- 2021 – Recreation Centre Charging Partnership: The City partnered with Alectra Energy Services under the NRCAN ZEVIP program to install 10 additional chargers at four recreation centres (East Bayfield, Peggy Hill, Allandale, and Sadlon Arena). Under this turnkey agreement, Alectra covers all capital, operational, and maintenance costs.
- 2023 – Comprehensive Review & Marina Policy: Motion 23-G-222 directed staff to prepare a comprehensive EVSE report and examine extending Waterfront Parking Permit rules to Marina EVSE, while ensuring net-zero taxpayer cost and considering restrictions on EV users during charging.

Consultation and Engagement:

No additional public consultation was undertaken specifically for this staff report. However, previous public engagement activities—outlined in staff report FAC001-24—form the basis of the feedback considered. The key themes identified through this engagement include:

- Concerns that dedicated EV parking stalls reduce overall parking availability, particularly during the busy summer months in the downtown area.

- A preference for universal charging stations, with Tesla-only chargers viewed as limiting accessibility for non-Tesla EV users.
- Observations that the Marina parking lot is underutilized during the winter and shoulder seasons, with high parking fees acting as a deterrent to EV charging.
- A belief that users should pay to access charging services, with free charging raising concerns about fairness and equity.
- Recognition that downtown charging infrastructure provides essential access for residents of high-rise buildings who may not have the ability to charge at home

Environmental and Climate Change Impact Matters:

In 2022, Council approved Inspiring Climate Action in Barrie, the City’s community energy and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction plan, and endorsed a target of achieving net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. The plan identifies the transportation sector as the largest contributor to community emissions, accounting for 56 percent of the total. Among the strategies outlined to address this challenge is a commitment to “advance the adoption of electric vehicles by creating an EV-ready City.” This includes enabling actions to expand access to electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) through the deployment of publicly accessible charging infrastructure. Renewing and optimizing the management of the downtown EVSE network will help improve utilization of existing assets and directly support the implementation of the City’s climate action objectives.

Electric vehicles, powered by electricity from Ontario’s relatively low-emission grid, offer significant environmental benefits. Compared to conventional gasoline or diesel-powered vehicles, EVs produce substantially lower life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions and do not contribute to local air pollution in the same way, supporting improved air quality and climate action goals

Appendix:

None.

Report Author:

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File #:

Not applicable

Pending # (if applicable):

P14/24