ALA American Library Association

January 18, 2021

The Honorable Stephanie Pollack
Deputy Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
via Regulations.gov

Re: Development of Guidance for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Deployment
86 FR 67782, Docket No. FHWA-2021-0022

Dear Deputy Administrator Pollack,

The American Library Association (ALA) respectfully submits these comments in response to the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) request for information about electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), P.L. 117-58. We encourage FHWA to support the installation of EV chargers at interested libraries and to recognize libraries as potential partners in educational and community engagement activities related to EVs.

Libraries and EV charging infrastructure

America's 17,000 public library[1] locations can contribute important sites to the national charging network. These convenient rural and urban locations receive 1.2 billion visits annually.[2]

Recently, a growing number of libraries have installed publicly accessible EV chargers in their parking facilities; see appendix. For instance, in Newton, MA, the public library is installing a solar panel canopy and EV chargers in its parking lot.[3] These initial installations have been supported by sources such as the Volkswagen settlement, state environmental departments, and partnerships with local utility companies. Because most libraries currently do not host EV chargers, additional funding potentially could add hundreds or thousands of installation sites.

Offering EV charging can align with many libraries' missions and values. EV chargers make libraries more accessible to EV users, who can visit the library to check out a book, use the internet, or attend a program while their vehicle charges.[4] In addition, EV chargers could support commuting by America's 360,000 library workers.[5] EV chargers also could help electrify public libraries' 671 bookmobiles[6] and other fleet vehicles operated by libraries, such as book delivery vans. Finally, because EVs are a cleaner form of transportation, offering EV charging can promote sustainability, which ALA recognizes as a core value of librarianship.[7]

Libraries and EV education and community engagement

Several libraries have hosted educational and community engagement activities, such as car shows and educational presentations, to familiarize the public with EVs and chargers. Examples include activities hosted at libraries in Danbury, CT;[8] Garrison, NY;[9] Los Alamos, NM;[10] Hamden, CT;[11] Rockford, IL;[12] Huntington Station, NY;[13] Taos, NM;[14] and Wells, ME.[15]

Responses to questions in the request for information

Question 11: We recommend that FHWA's guidance list libraries as potential sites for EV chargers (e.g., as "publicly accessible locations" for community grants under the IIJA); and list libraries as potential community organization partners for "educational and community engagement activities" under the IIJA. Specifying that libraries are eligible under these IIJA provisions can support a broad and equitable distribution of these activities, including in underserved communities.

Question 12: We recommend that FHWA collect and publish data on the categories of locations (e.g., library, school, service station, etc.) where EV chargers funded by FHWA are installed.

Conclusion

ALA urges FHWA to adopt these recommendations to support successful implementation of the agency's responsibilities under IIJA and as a component of overall policies to promote safe, accessible, and sustainable transportation for library workers and users. If we can provide more information, please contact Gavin Baker (gbaker@alawash.org).

Sincerely,

Kathi Kromer
Associate Executive Director, Public Policy and Advocacy
American Library Association

The American Library Association ("ALA") is the foremost national organization providing resources to inspire library and information professionals to transform their communities through essential programs and services. For more than 140 years, the ALA has been the trusted voice for academic, public, school, government and special libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all.

Appendix: Examples of publicly accessible EV charger installations at libraries	
Location	**Library**
Canton, OH	Stark Library, Main Library[16]
Dublin, CA	Alameda County Library, Dublin Branch[17]
Durham, NC	Durham County Library, three branches[18]
East Lansing, MI	East Lansing Public Library[19]
Ellicott City, MD	Howard County Library System, Miller Branch[20]
Eugene, OR	Eugene Public Library, Downtown Library[21]
Fond du Lac, WI	Fond du Lac Public Library[22]
Gardiner, NY	Gardiner Library[23]
Goshen, IN	Goshen Public Library[24]
Irving, TX	Irving Public Library, West Irving Branch[25]
Largo, FL	Largo Public Library[26]
Las Vegas, NV	Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, East Las Vegas branch[27]
Leesburg, GA	Lee County Library, Oakland Branch[28]
Longmont, CO	Longmont Public Library[29]
Meriden, CT	Meriden Public Library[30]
Mount Vernon, WA	Mount Vernon City Library[31]
Nashville, TN	Nashville Public Library, four branches[32]
Newton, MA	Newton Free Library[33]
Scarborough, ME	Scarborough Public Library[34]
Tempe, AZ	Tempe Public Library[35]
Washington, PA	Washington & Jefferson College, Clark Family Library[36]

Endnotes

[1] Public libraries are typically open to any member of the public and consequently are the focus of these comments. However, other library types, such as college and university libraries and K-12 school libraries, may also offer publicly accessible EV charging facilities or undertake educational and community engagement activities related to EVs.

[2] https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/2021-08/fy19-pls-results.pdf

[3] https://guides.newtonfreelibrary.net/c.php?g=1145237&p=8358596

[4] *See, e.g.*, https://georgialibraries.org/libraries-go-green/

[5] https://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet02

[6] https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/2021-08/fy19-pls-results.pdf

[7] https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2019_ms_council_docs/ALA%20CD%2037%20RESOLUTION%20FOR%20THE%20ADOPTION%20OF%20SUSTAINABILITY%20AS%20A%20CORE%20VALUE%20OF%20LIBRARIANSHIP_Final1182019.pdf

[8] https://danburylibrary.org/join-the-ev-olution-plug-into-electric-cars/

[9] https://stayhappening.com/e/electric-vehicle-show-E2ISTSANE5B

[10] https://losalamosreporter.com/2021/06/26/show-off-your-electric-car-at-july-10-electric-vehicle-show/

[11] https://www.hamden.com/calendar.aspx?PREVIEW=YES&EID=956

[12] http://r1planning.org/driveelectric

[13] https://shpl.info/events/electric-vehicles-101

[14] https://www.taoscounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/2089/Taos-Electric-Vehicle-Expo?bidId=

[15] https://www.pressherald.com/forecaster-calendar/?_escaped_fragment_=/show/?start=2020-04-04#!/details/ELECTRIC-VEHICLE-SHOW-FREE-WELLS/9390771/2021-09-12T13

[16] https://www.cantonrep.com/story/news/2021/03/18/stark-library-gets-electric-vehicle-charging-station/4747910001/

[17] https://dublin.ca.gov/2053/Electric-Vehicle-EV-Charging-Stations

[18] https://www.dconc.gov/county-departments/departments-a-e/engineering-and-environmental-services/sustainability-office/electric-vehicle-charging-stations

[19] https://www.cityofeastlansing.com/330/EV-Charging-Stations

[20] https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/cng-ho-ev-chargers-miller-library-20200219-ps4altss5nb5diju3dw4747lgm-story.html

[21] https://www.eugene-or.gov/4664/Electric-Vehicles-EVs

[22] https://www.nbc26.com/news/local-news/fond-du-lac-now-has-electric-vehicle-chargers

[23] https://www.townofgardiner.org/electric-vehicle-charging-station

[24] https://goshenindiana.org/blog/city-to-host-electric-vehicle-expo/

[25] https://www.cityofirving.org/2321/Electric-Vehicle-Charging-Stations

[26] https://www.tbnweekly.com/largo_leader/article_e59efd4c-71b1-11e9-8bbb-3be96b42840c.html

[27] https://lvccld.org/blogs/post/fun-facts-about-the-new-east-las-vegas-library/

[28] https://www.walb.com/2021/08/19/ga-power-lee-co-launch-communitys-first-ev-chargers/

[29] https://www.longmontcolorado.gov/Home/Components/Blog/Blog/31744/5975

[30] https://www.meridenlibrary.org/adult-information/electronic-vehicle-charging-station/

[31] https://www.mountvernonwa.gov/933/Mount-Vernon-Library-Commons-Project

[32] https://library.nashville.org/branch-amenities/Electric%20Car%20Chargers%20

[33] https://guides.newtonfreelibrary.net/c.php?g=1145237&p=8358596

[34] https://www.pressherald.com/2021/04/30/the-scarborough-communitys-ultimate-renewable-resource/

[35] https://www.tempe.gov/Home/Components/News/News/16038/3149?npage=7&seldept=6&selcat=45

[36] https://www.washjeff.edu/washington-jefferson-college-car-charging-stations-available-for-use/