

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated April 5, 2022

Applicant Eligibility

1. What counties are eligible?

Eligible chargers can only be installed in the 10-county ozone nonattainment area. This includes the following counties: Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, and Wise.

2. Is a school district considered to be a local government for this Call for Projects?

Yes. Eligibility includes public sector entities (e.g., local governments, transit agencies, school districts, public college, or university campuses, etc.) in the eligible counties.

3. For Clean Fleet Policy adoption, is an ordinance needed?

For local government adoption, typically it is adopted by the city council or commissioner's court. Include a signed copy in the application packet if NCTCOG does not already have it on file.

4. Do we need to meet all of the steps listed on the Clean Fleet Policy webpage by the application deadline or just adopt the policy? **[added 3/24/22]**

Prior to submitting an application to the [Electric Vehicle Charging Station CFP](#), the applicant needs to adopt the Clean Fleet Policy and submit an online Risk Assessment. Submitting an Intent to Submit is optional but if you submit one, we'll remind you of the Application deadline.

A signed copy of the Clean Fleet Policy needs to be submitted along with the application (if not already on file with NCTCOG) and the other attachments listed in the Electric Vehicle Charging Station CFP Guidelines (see page 12).

An element of the Clean Fleet Policy is to have an Idle Reduction Policy/SOP so If the applicant already has an Idle Reduction Policy/SOP then send us a copy. If the applicant does not have an Idle Reduction Policy/SOP, the applicant needs to implement one but that does not need to be done by the application deadline. There is a template for both the Clean Fleet Policy and an Idle Reduction Policy under Key Resources here: www.nctcog.org/fleetpolicy. The other steps listed on the Clean Fleet Policy webpage, such as reading the Clean Fleet Policy Guidance and becoming a DFWCC Stakeholder, do not have to be done by the application deadline.

Application

5. Is there a limit to the number of sites that can be submitted?

There is no limit, applicants should submit as many charging sites as they wish. NCTCOG reserves the right to partially fund an application, and each individual location will be scored individually based on location characteristics and how that address is responsive to the selection criteria.

6. Are multiple chargers or locations allowed in a single application?

Yes, each application can contain multiple chargers and locations (sites). Chargers are grouped by site within the application, and each site may have multiple chargers.

7. The attachments say budget on one and supporting budget on another, can you elaborate on what should be included in each?

The required attachment is the budget form. A recommended attachment is supporting budget documentation such as quotes or other vendor materials that supports the budget costs.

8. Would it be helpful for an applicant to prioritize the sites, in the event NCTCOG receives requests in excess of available funding?

NCTCOG reserves the right to partially fund an application, and each individual location will be scored individually based on location characteristics and how that address is responsive to the selection criteria. NCTCOG will award the locations that score highest based on selection criteria, regardless of the applicant's preferred prioritization.

9. How can I find out if we have a current risk assessment on file?

Contact Nancy Luong at nluong@nctcog.org.

Project Requirements and Eligibility

10. Can funding be used to upgrade or replace existing stations?

No, NCTCOG can only provide funding for new charging stations that are not yet on the ground.

11. Can the applicant charge a fee for use of the charging station? [Updated 3/24/22]

No, the chargers must be available at no-cost to the user **through the end of August 2024** to avoid program income requirements. **After August 31, 2024**, the applicant may charge fees.

12. Will awardees need to budget for ongoing electrical usage of the charger?

Yes, since one of the requirements is that the charging station is accessible to the public at no charge. However, see previous question regarding the ability to impose a fee after certain milestones are met.

Also note that typically, NCTCOG only provides an 80% federal share and requires 20% matching funds. In this program, NCTCOG is covering eligible costs with 100% federal funds, using Transportation Development Credits as match. The expenses incurred by covering additional electricity consumption may be similar to the expenses typically incurred by providing non-federal match.

13. Are Vehicle-to-grid (V2G) DCFC stations allowed?

Yes. Chargers with V2G capability are eligible and encouraged.

14. Does NCTCOG prefer Level 2 or DCFC stations?

NCTCOG does not prefer one charger type over the other.

15. Would solar powered equipment be able to be funded if it was to power the charging stations?

Yes, solar powered charging station equipment would be able to be funded as long as it meets federal procurement process, FHWA Buy America standards, and NEPA guidelines.

16. What is the Activity Life?

The Activity Life is 5 years. The grant-funded equipment must be operated and maintained for at least 5 years from the final reimbursement date. After that time, applicants should consult with NCTCOG prior to any changes in operation as property management requirements apply until fair market value of equipment reaches \$5,000 or less.

17. Do Davis-Bacon requirements apply?

Davis-Bacon applies for projects with construction costs that exceed \$2,000. If it is anticipated the costs of laborers, mechanics, and construction including painting will exceed \$2,000 then Davis-Bacon Requirements will apply.

18. Who do we contact for utility info?

This varies based on the location of the proposed charging station. Please reach out to NCTCOG at AQgrants@nctcog.org and we can provide you with contact information for the specific utility company in your territory.

19. Is this funding just for charging stations used by the fleet?

No. It is a requirement that the charging stations be accessible and at no-cost to the public.

20. What are considered eligible costs?

Eligible costs must be directly related to purchase and installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. Eligible costs include the purchase, installation, construction, and design to purchase and install an EV charger. Eligible costs are limited to costs incurred behind the applicant's electrical meter. Maintenance and operation costs of the charger are not eligible. Administrative costs or any other internal costs are also not eligible.

21. Are charging stations and equipment eligible for funding if the organization has already ordered them or installed them?

No, only new charging stations not previously ordered or installed are eligible for funding. Procurement activities may not start until after there is an executed agreement between the Applicant and NCTCOG, NCTCOG has determined the procurement documentation and Buy America documentation comply with federal requirements, and NEPA approval has been received.

22. Can an applicant issue a work order for design & engineering under an existing vendor contract that has already been procured and set in place?

Possibly. However, the applicant will need to work closely with NCTCOG. NCTCOG must review whether the existing vendor contract was procured through a process that complies with Federal Highway Administration requirements and ensure that all appropriate clauses relevant to use of Federal Highway Administration CMAQ funds are included. To earn points under the “Subrecipient Oversight” selection criteria, the applicant should attach a memo to the application describing the existing contract, how it was procured, what the envisioned work order would address, and how the work order would be issued.

23. Does the charger need to be available to the public 24/7? [added 3/24/22]

No. The awardee may place limits on access by the public. However, there is an expectation that the charging stations be available to the public for a reasonable amount of time – for example, it seems appropriate for charging stations located at a library to be available to the public during all hours that the library is open. Reasonable limitations may be associated with operating hours of the property where chargers are installed (e.g. a parking garage that is locked overnight) or with the need to reserve access for fleet vehicle recharging overnight.

24. Is land that is TxDOT public right of way eligible as a charger site for this grant? [added 3/24/22]

Because TxDOT is also a public sector entity, this would be allowable as long as the applicant has right to the land and it is not along an interstate. The program considers the location to be in the spirit of the program requirements. The applicant should provide documentation that it has right to make an installation on the property.

25. Does the grant include the warranty and the customer service for the charger? [added 3/25/2022]

At least a one-year warranty is required on the equipment and is an eligible cost. Customer service costs are part of ongoing operation and maintenance costs and are not an eligible cost.

26. Since the activity life is five years, is a 5-year warranty eligible for reimbursement? [added 4/5/2022]

A 1-year warranty on labor and materials is required by the program and this 1-year warranty is an eligible cost. Any warranty cost beyond 1-year is not eligible.

27. A 1-year warranty on labor and equipment is required and is an eligible cost. However, the warranty covers repairs to the equipment and operation and equipment maintenance/repairs are not eligible costs. Please explain. [added 4/5/2022]

A 1-year warranty on labor and materials is considered a fairly standard warranty and a way to protect the equipment owner from equipment problems experienced early on, such as from equipment defects or poor installation. Any needed maintenance and repairs not covered by the 1-year warranty or beyond the 1-year warranty are considered maintenance and operation costs and are not eligible.

28. Customer service for the charger is a separate cost (e.g. a phone number is provided

for assistance if there is a problem with the charger). Is that cost eligible?

[added 4/5/2022]

Customer service cost is associated with an optional add-on presented by the charging equipment provider and is not an eligible cost under this program.

Funding and Reimbursement

29. Can I combine Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funds with grant funds from this opportunity?

No. Combining these funds is not allowed due to different emissions reductions implications of the two funding programs. Also, this program pays 100% of eligible costs, so there is no value in combining with another program.

30. Can the organization implement fewer activities than the number of activities granted under an award?

Yes.

31. Are subscription/networking fees for charging stations eligible for reimbursement?

No, these are considered “operations and maintenance” expenses and are not eligible for reimbursement.

32. Is funding provided after the application is approved and before project begins or is reimbursement issued after the project is completed?

All funds are on a reimbursement basis.

33. Is reimbursement all at once, or can applicants be reimbursed as expenses are incurred?

Reimbursements can be issued throughout the process at major milestones, but NCTCOG generally prefers restricting frequency of reimbursement to no more than once a month. The Request for Reimbursement Packet must be submitted for each request.

34. If actual project costs are higher than what is submitted in the budget, how is that handled?

The award recipient would be responsible for any expenses above and beyond those awarded based on the application. These expenses will be classified as cost overruns.

35. What is the typical electricity cost that we might incur from making the chargers available at no cost?

Costs vary. Contact NCTCOG to get a list of peer entities who have been providing charging stations for a while and understand what their costs have been.

Implementation Requirements

36. How can I confirm if a company meets Buy America requirements?

The manufacturer will need to provide a completed and signed Domestic Content Worksheet and Buy America Certification form to confirm that they meet the Federal Highway Administration Buy America Requirements. NCTCOG staff will also review the paperwork to ensure compliance. Any detailed questions should be directed to Emily Beckham at ebeckham@nctcog.org.

37. Does the equipment need to be procured from a US-owned company?

No. While the equipment must meet Buy America requirements, the requirements are related to components and assembly. Company ownership is not part of Buy America.

38. At a high level, what are the property management requirements associated with federal grant money?

Grant recipients must maintain grant-funded charging stations in a manner consistent with the original grant scope and federal property management requirements in 2 CFR 200.312. This means that grant recipients must maintain charging stations in good working order and operate them in a manner consistent with the grant until the fair market value is \$5,000 dollars or less, or as long as needed, whether or not the program or project continues to be supported by the Federal award. The grant recipient must contact NCTCOG for further instructions regarding disposition. Sale, scrap, or another disposal without NCTCOG approval or when fair-market value exceeds \$5,000, could result in a partial return of grantfunding. See page 10 of the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects Guidelines for more details.

39. Can I use HGAC, Buyboard or other cooperative procurement contracts to procure my equipment?

Yes, NCTCOG highly encourages use of cooperative procurement contracts. NCTCOG will review the specific procurement contract(s) and determine if it complies with federal procurement requirements. If the contract complies, the organization will receive procurement approval from NCTCOG. If the contract does not comply, the organization will need to choose a different cooperative or conduct a federally compliant RFP or quote process (depending on total project cost as stated in the Guidelines). To-date, NCTCOG has reviewed several cooperative purchasing contracts and determined that certain contracts on BuyBoard and Sourcewell (formerly NJPA) purchasing cooperatives do meet federal requirements. However, this does not mean every contract under the aforementioned cooperatives have been approved for use and each individual contract must be reviewed by NCTCOG. See page 14 of the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects Guidelines for more details.

40. Will you produce a local or state co-op list for procurement?

Links to some cooperative procurement websites are provided on the [Call for Projects webpage](#) under Resources. Potential applicants are encouraged to bring others to NCTCOG's attention.

41. Why was The Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS) not included in the list of potential purchasing cooperatives?

NCTCOG was not as familiar with TIPS but has since added it to the list of potential purchasing cooperatives. Other purchasing cooperatives may be relevant as well. Feel free to provide additional cooperatives to be added to the listing, but as a reminder the listing of purchasing

cooperatives is intended as a resource and may not be a comprehensive list.

42. What is the best email to add to the approved product list?

NCTCOG does not maintain an approved product list. The list of potentially Buy America-compliant EV chargers is provided by one of the national laboratories associated with the Clean Cities program. To be added to that list, email cleancities@nctcoq.org and we will provide information to the lab for their follow-up. The lists of vendors on each purchasing cooperative are developed based on competitive solicitation that each purchasing cooperative issues, and each has their own contact information and process. NCTCOG recommends looking for a “For Vendors” section on each website.

43. What level of access does 'open to the public' require? For example, say an applicant does not provide access to just anyone, but provides access at no cost to a large pool of people (e.g., all staff working for the applicant’s organizations as well as a variety of peer institutions, which would result in access for thousands of people). Would this qualify as “open to the public”?

The intent of the requirement is to provide completely open access to any driver, regardless of affiliation. The scenario presented would be considered a “shared access” facility versus a “public access” facility. However, NCTCOG may consider this scenario if sufficient projects with truly “public access” are not received.

44. Does the charger program allow the City to enter into a contract with a vendor to install and maintain EV infrastructure?

Yes, as long as the stations are owned by the city, and installed on property owned by the city, a third-party vendor may be contracted for other services. Note that the procurement for that vendor will have to be federally compliant and we highly recommend utilizing purchasing cooperatives to expedite the procurement approval process. Several cooperative contracts include installation and maintenance services in addition to the hardware.

45. What data specifically will be required for reporting? [added 3/24/22]

At a minimum, NCTCOG will collect annually for each grant-funded charger: usage of the charger and the condition of the equipment. Usage of the charger could range from number of kilowatt-hours to number of hours the charger was in use to details of each individual charging session, depending on the capabilities of the charger. NCTCOG will work with each grant recipient on the best metric based on the chargers installed.