



Electric Vehicle Charging Zoning Study

Planning Commission Questions for the Community

The Planning Commission asks for community input on the following questions during the comment period and public hearing on draft code amendments for the Electric Vehicle Charging Zoning Study.

1. Is the right threshold for applying these regulations the development of 15 or more new/expanded parking spaces?

Electric Vehicles (EVs) are projected to be majority of U.S. light duty vehicle sales in the early 2030s. The aim of this new proposed ordinance is to exempt only the smallest land uses that would be more heavily burdened by the regulations, such as small missing middle housing and small businesses, while still significantly increasing EV charging provision in Saint Paul. Is 15 the right number? (Note: The regulations would not apply to existing parking.)

2. Is the EV charging installation requirement about right?

The proposal is for at least 5% of new or expanded parking spaces (if there are at least 15) to have an actual EV charging connection. For non-multifamily uses, that requirement would be capped for larger parking facilities with only up to four EV charging connections required – above that would be strictly optional. For example, a new 40-space parking lot would require two EV charging connections (regardless of land use). A 140-space parking lot for a development that includes multifamily would require seven EV charging connections, while a new 140-space parking lot for a school would only require four EV charging connections (thanks to the cap).

3. Is the EV charging capability requirement about right?

EV capability (conduit and electric panel space, but not necessarily anything else) is proposed to be required for 50% of new/expanded parking spaces (if there are at least 15).

4. Should any land uses be outright exempted from either EV installation or EV capability requirements?

The proposal does not exempt any uses outright. Although nationally most EV charging is projected to occur at home in the future, the high costs of retrofitting existing parking (especially for multifamily housing) may increasingly push many Saint Paul residents to seek charging options away from home as EVs become more universally adopted). The proposed requirements for EV charging and EV charging capability for non-multifamily uses (retail, office, congregate living, institutions) would help provide charging options for many employees and customers who do not have sufficient charging access at their own homes, especially many multifamily residents in Saint Paul.

5. Should we treat Level 3 charging any differently?

The proposal allows Level 3 EV charging (also known as DC fast charging) citywide as an accessory use. Level 3 charging is faster than Level 2 – it can fully charge a vehicle in 30 to 60 minutes – and is much more expensive to install. Some other communities have regulated Level 3 charging more restrictively, limiting it to commercial areas or even only the most intense commercial zones. Should Saint Paul allow Level 3 EV charging throughout the city or be more restrictive? Why?