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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

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From: Commissioner, Community Growth & Economic Development  
Report: #2025-INFO-69  
Date: September 5, 2025

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**Subject:**

Update on Partnerships for Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

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**Recommendation:**

Receive for information

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 In November 2024, Regional Council directed staff to investigate partnership opportunities with Ontario providers of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Staff were asked to report back on potential collaboration models, recommended site locations, and options such as advertising, corporate sponsorship, and using emerging technologies as potential revenue streams to offset infrastructure costs and generate economic benefits.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on progress made to date in response to Council direction and outlines proposed next steps for advancing public EV charging infrastructure.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 In Durham Region, the transportation sector accounts for 40 per cent of community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, making the transition to EVs a key strategy in advancing decarbonization. While most EV charging activity related to personal use occurs at home, the growth in higher-density housing developments may limit access to private EV charging infrastructure and create a barrier to adoption. Public

EV charging infrastructure can also support local economic development and tourism.

- 2.2 Guided by the Durham Community Energy Plan (DCEP), the Region has collaborated with local area municipalities and a range of public sector institutions to coordinate funding to support the installation of EV charging for both public and corporate fleet charging. The Region has led five successful funding applications to Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) under the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP), securing over \$4 million for the Region and community partners, of which just under \$3 million was pre-approved grant funding dedicated to Regional EV charging infrastructure. This funding supported the installation of approximately 350 EV chargers for the Region and local community partners, of which 170 were on Regional property and mostly dedicated for corporate fleet utilization. Expanding public EV charging infrastructure remains critical to accelerating EV adoption and meeting regional climate and energy transition objectives.

### **3. Strategic Analysis**

- 3.1 Following Regional Council's direction in November 2024, the Region developed an evaluative framework to identify community needs and guide collaboration with external partners. This included defining the role of municipal governments, establishing a site selection framework, and exploring third-party partnership models, all of which are detailed below.
- 3.2 Durham Region collaborates with local area municipalities, electricity distribution companies, and other public and private partners to expand access to public EV charging at suitable Regional and municipal facilities for residents, businesses, and visitors. Achieving the scale of EV charging infrastructure necessary to meet growing demand will require coordinated efforts across all levels of government, utilities, and other stakeholders.

### **Roles of Municipal Government**

- 3.3 Municipalities across Canada are actively exploring various approaches for delivering public EV charging infrastructure in response to increasing demand. Municipal delivery models may present limitations and greater risks when compared to collaborative third-party partnerships. This approach is supported by the City of Toronto's June 26, 2025 Council report "[Approach to Public Electric Vehicle Charging Delivery Model](#)" which notes that successful EV charging networks are typically built through multi-stakeholder collaboration, resulting in greater efficiency, cost savings, and reduced duplication or underutilized infrastructure.

3.4 The Southwest Ontario Regional EV Network, comprising Dufferin, Wellington, Grey, Bruce, Huron, and Perth Counties, formed a collaborative partnership to develop a regional EV network strategy aimed at advancing EV tourism and economic diversification by addressing infrastructure gaps. The partnership commitment included municipal funding applications to NRCan under the ZEVIP funding program and to the province through the ChargeON funding stream. The [Ivy Charging Network](#), a leading EV charging provider in Ontario wholly owned by Hydro One, was selected as the third-party turnkey provider. Under a ten-year host agreement, Ivy Charging Network assumed full responsibility for the ownership, operation, maintenance, and network management of public EV charging infrastructure across both public and private sites, operating independently from municipal systems. This approach mirrors successful models such as Peaks to Prairies, and Accelerate Kootenays in Western Canada.

### **Site Selection Framework**

- 3.5 To support the strategic placement of future EV charging stations, a collaborative workshop was conducted with representatives from local municipalities, economic development, tourism, utility providers, and key stakeholders. The input gathered during this session was used to create a comprehensive EV Charging Siting Framework, organized into six categories: walkability, accessibility, tourism potential, user experience, electrical infrastructure, and network integration. These categories consist of sixteen siting criteria, each including a rationale and weighted scoring system to assess the applicability of each location to the criteria.
- 3.6 To further refine the site selection process, the Siting Framework outlines six strategic principles that recommended locations should align with:
- Supporting a variety of EV charging needs
  - Promoting sustainable transportation planning and hierarchy
  - Ensuring equitable access for all users
  - Preparing for long-term growth
  - Considering third-party ownership models
  - Advancing local economic development
- 3.7 The EV Charging Siting Framework will be shared with all local area municipalities as a consistent tool to guide and coordinate the siting of public EV charging infrastructure across the region.

### **Third-Party Partnership**

- 3.8 Third-party partnership opportunities were reviewed by interviewing prospective agencies and electrical utilities to confirm their business models. These interviews confirmed that there are significant opportunities for Durham Region to partner with qualified third parties to accelerate the deployment of public EV charging infrastructure. Engaging third-party providers to purchase, install, own, and operate EV chargers can reduce liability and financial risk, support long-term financial sustainability, and ensure a reliable service by leveraging external expertise and capacity.
- 3.9 Experience from other regional networks demonstrates that collaboration with experienced owners and operators can de-risk projects, attract investment, and maximize community benefits. By shifting responsibility for financing, installation, and operation to the third-party partner, the Region can focus on strategic oversight and ensure that deployment aligns with local priorities and delivers a positive user experience. This model also provides flexibility to adapt to evolving technology and market conditions.
- 3.10 Durham Region's third-party implementation model allows the application of strategic principles such as equity, accessibility, and economic development while leveraging the operational strengths and resources of experienced partners to deliver turnkey EV charging solutions. Through a competitive procurement process, the Region ensures that infrastructure deployment aligns with regional priorities and delivers value for residents, businesses, and visitors.

### **Next Steps**

- 3.11 Following the development of a strategic framework outlined above, the Region is positioned to initiate a negotiated Request for Proposals to identify and select third-party partners capable of delivering turnkey public EV charging solutions in underserved and growth priority areas. Vendor selection will consider business models that support streamlined implementation, including site selection, permitting, lease agreement, and installation. Deployment across Regional, local municipal and potentially private properties, will be a key consideration, while ensuring Regional objectives for access and security of public facilities are addressed.

#### **4. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

4.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

a. Connected and Vibrant Communities

- C1. Align Regional infrastructure and asset management with projected growth, climate impacts, and community needs.

b. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action

- E2. Collaborate with partners on the low-carbon transition to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions across Durham Region.

c. Strong Relationships

- S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.

#### **5. Conclusion**

5.1 This approach has the potential for providing significant value and cost-efficiency by leveraging private sector investments to deliver public EV charging infrastructure while minimizing municipal risk, liability, and financial exposure. It supports Regional objectives including sustainable development, economic diversification, and Regional tourism, and plays a critical role in advancing widespread EV adoption by addressing infrastructure gaps across the Region.

5.2 Staff will report back in Q1 2026 with the results of the Request for Proposals process, including the identification of preferred third-party turnkey partners and recommended next steps for implementation.

5.3 For additional information, contact: Ian McVey, Director, Environment & Climate at 905-668-7711, extension 3803.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Sandra Austin

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