City of Cambridge  
File No. 10358  
Request for Information for  
EV Charging Stations Network and Software Solutions

The City of Cambridge (“City”) invites and welcomes sealed submissions, which must be received at the Office of the Purchasing Agent, Room 303, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge Massachusetts 02139 prior to 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 2nd, 2022 to provide the following services:

The purpose of this Request for Information (“RFI”) is to elicit the advice and best analysis of knowledgeable persons in the Electric Vehicle vendor community to enable the City of Cambridge Department of Public Works (DPW) to understand the current technology solutions of Electrical Vehicle (EV) network providers, Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) and manufacturers.

Copies of the Request for Information (“RFI”) may be obtained at the Office of the Purchasing Agent on or after Thursday, May 19th, 2022. This RFI may be downloaded from the City’s website: www.cambridgema.gov, online services, Purchasing Bid List, Regular RFP, File No. 10358. This is not a solicitation of quotes or invitation for bids and no contract will be executed as a result of this Request for Information. This RFI is for market research purposes only and does not constitute an offer by the city of Cambridge to perform the tasks listed in this RFI.

Questions concerning the RFI must be submitted in writing by 11:00 AM. on Wednesday, May 25th, 2022, to Elizabeth L. Unger, Purchasing Agent, at the address above, or by email to Purchasing@cambridgema.gov. Answers to substantive questions will be posted to the website in the form of an addendum. It is the responsibility of all proposers to check the website for addenda.

One (1) Electronic copy must be submitted by 11:00 a.m. June 2nd, 2022 via e-mail to purchasing@cambridgema.gov. Respondents may also submit hard copies to the Office of the Purchasing Agent, Room 303, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge Massachusetts 02139. Please label “RFI for Agenda and Minutes Software, File No. 10358. Any submissions received after such time will not be accepted, unless the date and time has been changed by addendum. Delivery to any other office or department does not constitute compliance with this paragraph, unless the submissions are received by the Purchasing Agent by the established deadline.

Elizabeth L. Unger, Purchasing Agent City of Cambridge

Confidentiality and Public Records Law
All responses to this RFI will be public record under the Commonwealth’s Public Records Law, Mass. Gen. L. Ch. 66 s. 10, regardless of confidentiality notices set forth on such writings to the contrary.
I. General Instructions

Please note that this RFI is issued solely for the purpose of obtaining information. Nothing in this RFI shall be interpreted as a commitment on the part of the city to enter a contract with any respondent of to make any procurement.

a) This RFI has been posted on [05/19/2022].

b) Respondent Questions. Potential respondents who have questions regarding this RFI may e-mail them to purchasing@cambridgema.gov by [05/25/2022]. Respondents may only make inquiries and request clarification concerning this RFI by written questions via e-mail.

c) Response Submission. All responses to this RFI are due no later than 11:00 a.m. on [06/02/2022]. Respondents should submit one (1) electronic copy via e-mail to purchasing@cambridgema.gov and may, if they choose, also submit hard copies to the Office of the Purchasing Agent, Room 303, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge Massachusetts 02139. All responses must include on the first page the official name (if any) of the firm or entity submitting the response. Please consecutively number all pages of the response.

d) Additional Information. The City of Cambridge retains the right to request additional information from respondents. The City may request further explanation or clarification from any and all respondents during the RFI review process.

II. Costs.

By submitting a response, respondents agree that any cost incurred in responding to this RFI, or in support of activities associated with this RFI, shall be the sole responsibility of respondent. The city shall not be held responsible for any costs incurred by respondents in preparing their respective responses to this RFI.

III. Public Record.

All responses to this RFI will be public record under the Commonwealth’s Public Records Law, Mass. Gen. L. Ch. 66 s. 10, regardless of confidentiality notices set forth on such writings to the contrary.

IV. Information Requested

a) Company Name (please list parent company as well)
b) Company Address:
c) Company Website:
d) Contact name and information (e-mail address required)

Provide a description of your company and the basis of your expertise in offering a response to this RFI.
I. Introduction

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to elicit information from the Electric Vehicle vendor community to enable the City of Cambridge Department of Public Works (DPW) to understand the current technology solutions of Electrical Vehicle (EV) network providers, Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) and manufacturers. The City of Cambridge reserves the right to use this information for market research purposes. This is not a procurement for the services described in this RFI. No contract shall result from respondents’ participation in this RFI.

Vendors can reply to specific questions on Part III of this document that apply to them based on their Software, Network or Hardware solutions.

II. Overview

The City is actively evaluating and implementing fleet expansion of Battery Electric (BEV) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) across all vehicle classes with the ultimate zero-emission transportation goal in alignment with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts goal of 300,000 Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) strategy¹.

Current

- City Fleet: 9 Level 2 Ports (Public access after-hours). Annual use of EVSE - 13,000 kWh
- General Public: 23 Level 2 Ports - Annual use of EVSE: 65,000 kWh

Projected City goals:

- City Fleet: approximately 200 plus charging ports for fleet use by 2050 (subject to change).
- General Public: Expansion goals are in development.

¹ For more information on this goal visit https://massdriveclean.org/goals/
Existing Rate Structure:

The City of Cambridge currently has two rate structures or pricing policies based on EV users’ classification:

**Rate# 1. General Public:** EV drivers charging at City-owned stations will pay $0.189 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), plus $0.15 per hour while the vehicle is plugged into the charging station.

**Rate #2 City Vehicles:** Municipal Fleet vehicles are charge-free at $0.00

Preventative Maintenance Contract (PMC)

The City has a preventative maintenance contract for all municipally owned charging stations that includes inspection, testing, and cleaning of all ports, active 24/7 monitoring of stations functionality via the software interface, including notification and diagnostics if an issue arises.

III. Information Solicited

The City of Cambridge is looking for a general approach to current market trends in the Electrical Vehicle landscape related to software, hardware, and network charging solutions. The EV industry faces challenges and opportunities that the City is interested in identifying through the following questions:

**RFI Questions:**

**Part I. - Software, network, reporting capabilities, and customer experience:**

**Software and network:**

1. Describe how compatible your software is with different EVSE brands?
2. Describe your software modules solutions to EVSE. e.g., reporting, pricing module, etc.
3. Does your software allow administrative users to set up categories based on paid service-general public vs. city fleet vehicles free of charge?
4. Does your software provide the ability to set up a fee structure based on different times of the day? If yes, explain.
5. Does your software provide the ability to set up timestamps or alerts when a vehicle stops accepting electricity? If yes, explain.
6. Describe your cloud network or server solution capabilities and limitations.
7. What’s the cost-benefit between cloud network solutions vs. servers?
8. How often does your software upgrade, and what is the process?
9. Please list the top 3 hardware solution that your software users prefer to use. Is there any trend towards one manufacturer over others? Please explain.
10. Describe your software interface presentation and user experience.

Pricing structure - Business to Customers (B2C)

11. What types of payment solutions does your software offer to drivers?
12. Does your platform offer credit card touch-less payment technology?
13. Does your platform allow drivers to pay throughout the EVSE software?
14. Is your payment processing solution Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant? If yes, please explain.

Fee Structure - Business to Business (B2B)

15. Provide a general approach to your Network fee structure.
16. Is your Software License fee-based plus fee per transaction? If yes, explain.
17. What is the cost to transfer revenue from your platform to the Client/City?

Traffic and Parking Compliance, and Locking Mechanism

18. Does your software allow integration with various mobile Parking platforms payment for parking and EVSE fees? If yes, please explain.
19. Does your software provide capability to disable charging port locking mechanism to allow removal in case of emergency? If yes, please explain.
20. Does your software allow the setup of different parking violations fees at the EVSE when permitted parking time is exceeded? If yes, please explain.

Data and reporting

21. What types of report types does your software provide? Explain.
22. What is your users’ data privacy policy?
23. What are your users’ data security protection capabilities?
24. What is your policy on data ownership and transfer to other networks and platforms if needed?
25. Is there a fee penalty for transferring data from one network to another?
26. Does your software capture 100% of all transactions? Explain.
27. What’s your data processing error margin i.e., fees not charged when kWh is dispensing, fees charged but kWh is not dispensing, missing ticket reporting issues? Please explain.

Experience and customer support

28. Does your organization provide software solutions to clients in New England?
29. Provide references from three current clients in New England.
30. Does your company offer 24/7 customer support service?

Part II. – Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE)

1. Describe your product line, including pedestal, wall, and pole-mounted products; and charging capacities in KW/h?
2. Provide a general approach of your EVSE for Level 2 and Level 3?
3. Are your EVSE components generic or proprietary?
4. Are your EVSE components compatible with other EVSE manufacturers? Name some of the brands that your EVSE is not compatible with.
5. What’s the life cycle of your EVSE hardware solution? And what’s the residual value?
6. What’s are the main material components of your EVSE solutions? And what is it that makes it better than the competitors?
7. Describe your EVSE performance during winter season or cold weather conditions.
8. Please explain your organization’s manufacturing scaling capabilities in five years.
9. Describe how often your manufacturing capabilities face final products delays.
10. Describe how your manufacturing capabilities were impacted by the Pandemic? And how was resolved to provide the best service to your clients?
11. What are the most expensive parts of your EVSE solution and why?
12. What are your current connection technology capabilities with modems? 4G?
13. Is maintenance and repair provided directly? Or through third-party providers? Please list all local (within 50 miles of Cambridge, MA) maintenance and repair providers.
14. What electrical capacity is needed to install your hardware products?
15. What is your organization’s effort to make EVSE affordable in terms of repair, replacement, and maintenance? In connection with this, please list and provide documentation regarding replacement parts that are available.
16. Is your EVSE approved by Eversource?
17. What’s your preferred software network providers? and why? Please, list two or three.
Part III. – Software as a Service and Charging as a Service.

1. Does your company provide Charging as a Service? If yes, explain.
2. What is your Charging as a Service pricing structure? Please explain.
3. What’s the cost-benefit of your Charging as a Service solution vs. other solutions?
4. Does your company provide Software as a Service (SaaS)? If yes, explain.
5. What is your SaaS pricing structure? Please explain.
6. What’s the cost-benefit of your SaaS solution vs. non-SaaS?
7. What are your current software and hardware innovations initiatives?

Part IV. – Fleet EVSE

1. Does your organization provide fleet only EVSE options? If yes, explain.
2. What is the mounting mechanism of the fleet EVSE (e.g., wall, pedestal, ceiling)?
3. Is there a restriction on how many fleet vehicles can be assigned to a fleet charger? Please explain.

Part V. – Bidirectional and Smart Charging Stations

1. Does your organization provide bidirectional EV charging stations? If yes, explain.
2. Does your organization provide Vehicle to Grid EV chargers? If yes, explain.
3. Does your organization provide Vehicle to Building EV chargers? If yes, explain.
4. What is the current power capacity of your Bidirectional EV charging station?
5. Explain the benefits of bidirectional charging.
6. Does your organization provide Smart charging solutions? Please explain.

Part VI. – Other technologies

1. Does your organization offer any other EVSE technologies not described in this RFI?

IV. Costs.

By submitting a response, respondents agree that any cost incurred in responding to this RFI, or in support of activities associated with this RFI, shall be the sole responsibility of respondent. The city shall not be held responsible for any costs incurred by respondents in preparing their respective responses to this RFI.

* Please attach additional specifications or software information as necessary.