



MEMORANDUM

DATE: DECEMBER 8, 2020

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: MIKE OLIPHANT, MENDOCINO COUNTY, CHIEF BUILDING OFFICIAL
 JESSE DAVIS, MENDOCINO COUNTY, SENIOR PLANNER

SUBJECT: ORDINANCE ADDING CHAPTER 18.50 TO THE MENDOCINO COUNTY CODE RELATED TO AN EXPEDITED PERMITTING PROCESS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

BACKGROUND

In 2015, the State of California adopted Assembly Bill 1236 (2015, Chiu, Codified as Government Code Section 65850.7), which requires local jurisdictions with a population of less than 200,000 residents to adopt an ordinance creating an expedited permit process for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. The amendments to Section 65850.7 include the requirement that jurisdictions adopt an ordinance for this process and make available an online checklist of requirements. For review, the proposed Mendocino County Electric Vehicle Charging Station Checklist is attached to this memorandum as Attachment A.

MENDOCINO COUNTY STATISTICS – EV CHARGING STATIONS & VEHICLES

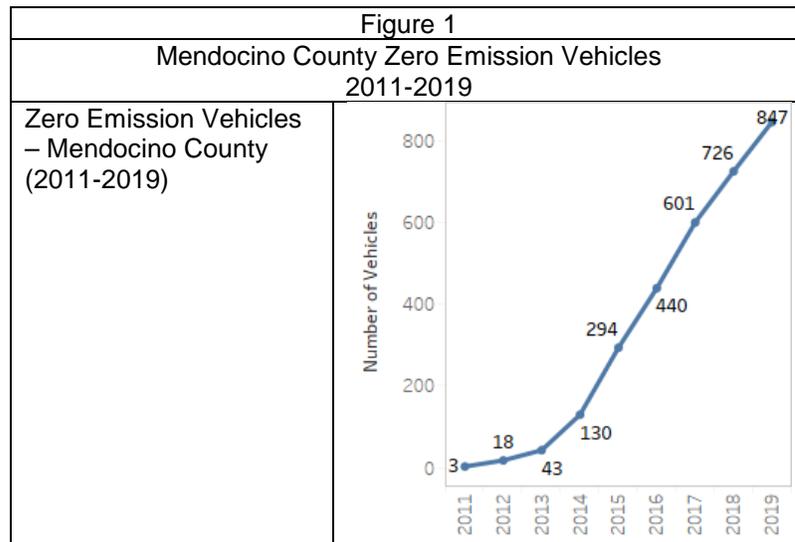
The California Energy Commission (CEC) and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) track the sales and registration of light duty zero emission vehicles (ZEVs). ZEVs include battery-electric (BEVs), plug-in hybrid electric (PHEV), and fuel cell vehicles. The CEC also tracks the number of plug-in electric vehicle chargers serving these light-duty vehicles in California. Comparatively, Mendocino County, which includes incorporated jurisdictions for the purpose of this memorandum, presents a similar profile to the statewide registration of vehicles, with the exception of diesel and BEVs. Further information is presented in Table 1, below:

Table 1				
Vehicle Ownership in Mendocino County versus Statewide as of December 2019				
Vehicle Type	Mendocino County (2019)		Statewide (2019)	
	Number of Vehicles	Percentage of Total	Number of Vehicles	Percentage of Total
Light Duty	82,115	100%	28,462,885	100%
Gasoline	69,334	83.5%	25,526,368	87.9%
Diesel (Bio & Regular)	6,975	8.4%	680,622	2.3%
Battery Electric	315	.380%	308,447	1.0%
Plug-in Hybrid	532	.641%	251,522	.866%
Gasoline Hybrid	2,477	2.9%	1,114,944	3.8%
Flex-Fuel	3,322	4.0%	1,131,474	3.8%
Natural Gas & Propane)	8	.008%	9,477	9.3%

Source: California Energy Commission (2020). CEC Zero Emission Vehicle and Charger Statistics. Data Last Updated August 28, 2020. Retrieved From: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-insights/zero-emission-vehicle-and-charger-statistics>

Presently, within the County, there are 110 total Public and Shared Private Electric Vehicle Chargers, 87 of which are Level 2 Chargers, while the remainder are DC Fast Chargers. The number of registered ZEVs has risen substantially since 2011, as conveyed by the graph in Figure 1. It should be noted that there are comparatively fewer BEVs in Mendocino County, when compared to PHEVs. Of the 847 ZEVs considered “on

the road' in 2019, 532 were PHEVs while 315 were BEVs.¹ This disparity is substantiated by the corresponding development of EV charging station infrastructure. Given the substantial increase in range capabilities of BEVs since 2011, especially for vehicles like the Nissan LEAF, Tesla Model S and Kia Soul, which each saw dramatic increases in range capabilities, BEVs are expected to become more common throughout Mendocino County and the State more broadly. There are presently no registered Fuel Cell Vehicles identified by the CEC registered within Mendocino County.



Source: California Energy Commission (2020). California Energy Commission Zero Emission Vehicle and Charger Statistics. Data Last Updated August 28, 2020. Retrieved From: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-insights/zero-emission-vehicle-and-charger-statistics>

As stated by the *Mendocino County Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) and Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan Update (2019)*, while the distribution of plug-in electric vehicles is generally in line with the population distribution, there are some notable variations:

“The City vehicle registration data shows that approximately one-third of all vehicles registered in Mendocino County are registered in Ukiah. Additionally, approximately one-third of the battery electric PEVs are registered in Ukiah. More plug-in hybrid PEVs are registered in Fort Bragg compared to the other cities reviewed. Less than 10 percent of the battery electric PEVs in the County are registered in Willits as compared to 15 percent of all vehicles. Despite the low population density, residents in areas of the County outside of the three largest cities have disproportionately higher electric vehicle ownership.”²

The *Mendocino County Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) and Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan Update (2019)* builds on substantial previous work to facilitate the development of a robust charging network at regional scale. The 2013 Regional Readiness Plan, which developed the original strategy for implementing a countywide network of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging stations, recommended just 18 new electric vehicle charging stations countywide at that time. Since then public outreach and site specific evaluations continue to advance implementation of these plans. Regional planning efforts are considered critical for the continued development of alternative fuels, as well as for the application of state and regional grant funds. In conjunction with these regional planning efforts, it will be necessary to streamline regulatory approaches as required by AB 1236, and the impetus for this ordinance.

¹ California Energy Commission (2020). California Energy Commission Charger Statistics. Data Last Updated August 28, 2020. Retrieved From: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-insights/zero-emission-vehicle-and-charger-statistics>

² Mendocino County Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) and Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan Update, Prepared By W-Trans for the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), June 2019

ANALYSIS

The proposed ordinance (OA_2020-0002) addresses all requirements of AB 1236, such as accepting and approving electric vehicle charging station permit applications electronically, directing the Chief Building Official to utilize an approved “checklist”, requiring that the checklist and all permitting documentation be published on a publicly accessible internet website,³ allowing for electronic submittal of such permit application and associated documentation, and authorizing the Building Official to administratively approve complete applications. Once a permit application satisfies all information requirements, it will be deemed complete and promptly processed. An approved checklist in combination with supportive literature from the State Office of Planning and Research provides property owners and contractors with a complete set of resources, as well as an efficient method for the permitting of residential and commercial electric vehicle charging systems in the County.

While the County of Mendocino currently issues most residential applications for electric vehicle charging stations over the-counter, adoption of this Ordinance will codify these streamlined processes for both residential and commercial applications in an effort to facilitate compliance with State law and further encourage the development of a robust EV charging network.

For BEVs and PHEVs to be a viable alternative to gasoline-powered vehicles in Mendocino County, there will need to be a comprehensive network of charging stations facilitated in conjunction with regional partners. With the increasing popularity of ZEVs and increasing sales, the need for associated infrastructure is increasingly important. By 2025, California will need between 229,000 and 279,000 plug-in electric chargers, including public, workplace, and multi-unit dwelling chargers.⁴ This projected need for chargers is in addition to single-family home chargers, which serve as the primary charging location for most plug-in electric vehicle drivers. Moving forward, the County will need to ensure this topic is a continued consideration in conjunction with incorporated and regional partners, such as the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG).

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

This ordinance is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to section 15061, subdivision (b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because it can be seen with certainty that adoption of the ordinance does not result in a physical change in the environment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt an Ordinance adding Chapter 18.50 to the Mendocino County Code for expedited Electric Vehicle Charging Station Permitting in accordance with Assembly Bill 1236, and direct the Chief Building Official to convey compliance to the California Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development.

ATTACHMENT LIST:

- Attachment A - Mendocino County EV Checklist Form & Building Permit Application
- Attachment B - OA_2020-0002 (ZEV AB 1236) Ordinance Chapter 18.50
- Attachment C - 2019 MCOG ZEV and Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan

³ County Website – EV Charging Stations: <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/planning-building-services/regulations/electric-vehicle-charging>

⁴ See “Quantifying the electric vehicle charging infrastructure gap across U.S. markets,” ICCT (2019), pg. ii;