



San jos 233 electric vehicles evs

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"There's a feeling that EVs are out of reach for renters or lower-income people. I think we can overcome that."

San Jose wants to boost electric car adoption in low-income and disadvantaged neighborhoods by eliminating "charging deserts"; and adding incentives to make juicing up more attractive for residents.

As part of a pilot program unanimously approved by the San Jose City Council Tuesday, the city will work with vendors to install banks of electric vehicle (EV) chargers over the next two years at one to three city-owned or private locations.

While residents in wealthier parts of the city are purchasing new electric vehicles at high rates, lower income residents face multiple barriers to EV adoption. In addition to the high cost, there's a lack of charging stations in public places and apartment complexes.

"Low-income residents also typically lack the financial resources to install (chargers) at home," Kate Ziemba, a senior program manager with San Jose Clean Energy, told San Jos? Spotlight. "We want to make sure these communities are not left behind in the transition to EVs."

In East San Jose ZIP code 95122, which covers neighborhoods like Kennedy, Overfelt and Little Saigon, 729 new zero-emissions vehicles have been registered there through mid-October, according to data from the California Energy Commission.

Meanwhile, in the wealthy West San Jose ZIP code 95124, covering the Cambrian Park area, 4,937 zero-emissions vehicles have been purchased in the same time frame.

Along with the installation of charging stations, the city is planning to enlist the help of community organizations to run an extensive multilingual outreach and education program, Ziemba said.

The program will aim to raise awareness of the chargers, and try to get more people comfortable with electric cars by bringing some to neighborhoods for "ride and drive" events.

The city would also use the events to assist residents one-on-one in navigating all the various federal, state and local tax credits, rebates or incentives available that could bring down the cost of a new or used EV as much as \$20,000. For example, new base models of the Chevy Bolt are listed for about \$26,000.

District 7 Councilmember Maya Esparza, who represents portions of East San Jose, said there are often fears or uncertainty around the idea of switching to an electric car.

"I love the idea of having events where people can come and learn about them outside of the auto mall or something," Esparza said at the meeting.

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