



City of San Antonio

Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 20-6691
Type: Staff Briefing - Without Ordinance
In control: Community Health and Equity Committee

On agenda: 11/16/2020

Title: A briefing on a potential agreement between the City of San Antonio and Blink Charging Company for Publicly-Accessible Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure on City Property (RFP 20-076). [David McCary, Assistant City Manager; Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer]

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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DEPARTMENT: Office of Sustainability

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Douglas R. Melnick, AICP, ISSP-SA, CNU-A

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

A briefing on a potential agreement between the City of San Antonio and Blink Charging Company for Publicly-Accessible Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure on City Property (RFP 20-076).

SUMMARY:

In accordance with the SA Climate Ready Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP), the City will consider an agreement with Blink Charging Company (Blink) to own and operate electric vehicle charging infrastructure on City property and manage associated software, marketing and customer interface elements in a manner that is cost neutral to the City. The agreement will facilitate a City contractor to be able to apply for funding through the Texas Volkswagen Mitigation Program (TxVEMP) for Zero Emission Vehicle Supply Equipment projects. The project supports the City’s goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ground-level ozone attributed to the transportation sector by encouraging cleaner fuel technologies, including electric vehicles.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Promoting clean and efficient technologies, including electric vehicles, is a mitigation strategy for reducing transportation consumption in the City of San Antonio’s SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan, the Climate Action & Adaptation Plan, the Ozone Attainment Master Plan and the American Cities Climate Challenge.

In collaboration with both internal departments and external partners through the American Cities Climate Challenge, the Office of Sustainability has conducted studies and review to understand the community's and municipality's electric vehicle needs. The City of San Antonio Electric Vehicle Fleet Conversion and City-Wide Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Study explains that charger availability is a major barrier to electric vehicle (EV) ownership in San Antonio. Large areas of San Antonio have no access to fast forms of public charging. In order to accelerate electric vehicle (EV) adoption, the City needs to expand its electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. CPS Energy estimates 45,000 electric vehicles (EVs) in San Antonio by 2030. As of July 2020, there are 4,400 registered electric vehicles (EVs) within the CPS service territory.

In December 2019, the City reviewed proposals submitted through a Request for Information (RFI) to gain clarity on elements to include in a potential future Request for Proposals (RFP) and/or within a grant application for charging infrastructure through the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program (TxVEMP), administered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

Request for Proposal-Publicly-Accessible Electric Vehicle (EVS) Charging Infrastructure on City Property (RFP20-076, RFX# 6100012932) was issued Wednesday July 1, 2020. The City of San Antonio's Office of Sustainability requested proposals for cost-neutral business models with third-party electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) providers to install, operate, maintain, and own publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure on City property.

The evaluation committee was composed of voting members representing the City of San Antonio Office of Sustainability, Public Works Department, Center City Development & Operations, and Finance Department. The committee also included advisory members representing CPS Energy and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The committee reviewed five proposals and chose to interview the top three proposals. Based on their proposal, interview, commitment to cost neutrality, and experience, the evaluation committee recommended the contract be awarded to Blink Charging (Blink.) A successful letter was sent to Blink on Friday, October 2, 2020.

ISSUE:

The SA Climate Ready Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) implementation actions detail the City's commitment to lead by example and accelerate electric vehicle adoption rates in San Antonio. The implementation actions directly related to electric vehicles (EVs) are:

- Invest in new EV charging infrastructure throughout the City,
- Access existing EV group purchase programs,
- Accelerate the adoption of carbon-free transportation in all sectors through education and encouragement, and
- Assess the barriers to EV ownership, with a priority focus on equity.

As stated in the City of San Antonio Electric Vehicle Fleet Conversion and City-Wide Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Study, there are currently large sections of San Antonio with no access to publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. With no access to charging at-home or at-work, some electric vehicle (EV) owners may have limited public options to fuel their vehicle. This limited availability could lead to a delayed adoption of electric vehicles (EVs). The historic opportunity for grant funding through the Texas Volkswagen Mitigation Program (TxVEMP) provides a pathway to not only more electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, but electric vehicle (EV) adoption among San Antonio's community.

The Blink proposal is for a turn-key ownership model whereby Blink is responsible for all costs and operations and provides a revenue share to the City. This proposed structure guarantees cost neutrality for the City.

In order to ensure cost-neutrality to the City, Blink will own and operate the EVSE, assume all costs incurred, and provide a revenue sharing arrangement with COSA as outlined in the Parking Agreement (Exhibit V). Revenue share values will be determined by mutual agreement based on actual projects selected, actual costs incurred to deploy, and incentives available. Blink intends to fully pursue all grants, rebates, and incentives available, including the anticipated support through the TCEQ under the TxVEMP. The project may be implemented in phases in order to access funding opportunities. For example, TxVEMP allows grant applicants to apply for up to 50 activities every three months. Grantees must pay project costs upfront, after which TCEQ reimburses grantee for eligible activities, or up to \$2500 per dual-port charging unit.

The Agreement with Blink Charging is for 1 year with four 1-year renewal options. If funding for the entire agreement is not appropriated at the time this Agreement is entered into, City retains the right to terminate this Agreement at the expiration of each of City's budget periods, and any subsequent contract period is subject to and contingent upon such appropriation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this briefing item.

As provided in the contract documents, Blink will provide, install, operate and maintain all electric vehicle support equipment (EVSE) and manage associated software, marketing and customer service interface under this Agreement at no cost to the City. This project is cost neutral for the City, and Blink will pay the City a 50/50 charging revenue share of the proceeds once revenue exceeds costs, as provided in Exhibit V, section 4. City funding will not be required during the term of this Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff requests recommendation to send to full council for consideration.