



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS THE COMMUNITY PROCESS FOR INSTALLING ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING STATIONS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

- WHEREAS:** As our world turns towards more energy-efficient and sustainable transportation, the demand for and usage of electric vehicles has increased. In 2020, Boston released a “Zero Emission Vehicle Roadmap” to support Go Boston 2030 and the widespread adoption of Electric Vehicles (EV) and expand EV infrastructure. In December 2021, the Boston City Council held a hearing to discuss investments in EV Charging infrastructure and electrifying the City of Boston’s Vehicle Fleet, and discussed expanding EV infrastructure at city facilities such as BCYF centers, Boston Public School parking lots, and other municipal buildings and parking lots; *and*
- WHEREAS:** There are now over 1000 charging stations available for public usage in Boston. Some of these stations are owned and operated by the City on curbside and municipal lots, while others are on private property; *and*
- WHEREAS:** The City has two approaches to installing curbside EV charging infrastructure, including through Public Ownership at City Assets, where the City works with a vendor - Better Together Brain Trust in partnership with Flo - to install and maintain charging ports adjacent to public amenities; and “Licensing the Right-of-Way”, which is a public/private partnership where residents who own a building can join the City’s selected vendor waitlist - Itselectric or Greenspot - to become a property partner; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In the public/private partnership approach, the vendor would install and operate the stations at no cost to the City. Residents can request and install public charging stations in front of their homes, and existing developments must acquire an electrical permit by submitting an application with approval from a licensed electrician and the Boston Inspectional Services Department; *and*
- WHEREAS:** The community engagement process for these approaches is not often clear. In March this year, the City of Boston held a community meeting in District 2 regarding five locations in South Boston and the South Boston Waterfront. However, more recently, residents on Linden Street in South Boston - a tight-knit, residential side street which was not discussed in the community meeting - were notified of a curbside EV charging station coming to their street under the public/private partnership program, with a resident approved for an EV charging station to be installed in front of their home without any community engagement and public process; *and*

**WHEREAS:** Given South Boston's acute parking scarcity crisis, residents of Linden street raised concerns regarding street parking as the electric charging port would directly take away a parking spot from the majority of the residents and families who do not own an EV on Linden. There are concerns the charging port would be taken away for one household's particular benefit, which would cause a lasting impact on a street that is already strained for parking. Naturally, residents across the neighborhood expressed concerns on the lack of community process and potential for a similar dynamic to play out in their part of the community; *and*

**WHEREAS:** Residents noted that while they are not against EV charging stations, and a number of EV owners expressed confusion on the practicality of this location, they are disappointed with the overall lack of public process that resulted in approval at this site. Neighbors have highlighted the critical need to be sensitive to the community's existing parking issues by instead pursuing more favorable locations that would be more appropriate while lessening the impact, such as municipal and school parking lots, partnering with state and federal colleagues on suitable areas, and pursuing public/private partnerships with gas stations, our retail pharmacy chains, grocery chains, shopping centers and other commercial areas; *and*

**WHEREAS:** As a City, we cannot continue to make changes without public feedback and lose our residents' trust. As the City expands its EV infrastructure to meet the growing demand for electric vehicles, the city should adopt a more thorough community engagement process for installing EV charging stations to ensure any potential issues are heard, addressed, and that the community is able to lend its voice to the selection of sensible locations; *and*

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:**

That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss a better community process for installing electric vehicle charging stations. Representatives from the Boston Transportation Department, Boston Planning Department, the Office of Neighborhood Services and other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to attend.

**Filed in Council: May 21, 2025**