

# Charging Forward: Bold EV Actions by Utilities, States and Cities in 2019

In 2019, utilities, states and cities paved the way for an electric transportation future by taking bold actions and implementing supportive policies and programs. This activity by utilities, states and cities around the country will accelerate the growth of electric vehicles (EVs) adoption not just in the light-duty sector, but also in the medium-heavy duty sector and the adoption of electric buses. It's a team effort to advance the policies that promote transportation electrification—a huge thank you to all our partners and EV advocate friends for the fantastic work done in 2019.

## Utilities

Electric power providers across the U.S. are revving up the transition to clean electric vehicles. As of December 1, 2019, investor-owned utilities have invested or proposed over \$200 million in EV charging, purchasing and outreach programs this year.<sup>1</sup> Here are some of the programs and initiatives offered by investor-owned and municipal utilities and rural electric cooperatives that launched or started producing results in 2019:

### Salt River Project (AZ)

In June, the management board of the [Salt River Project](#) -- a non-profit, community-based water and power company serving about two million people in central Arizona -- set a goal of supporting 500,000 electric vehicles within its service territory and providing price plans to help manage EV charging by 2035.

### Dominion Energy's Electric School Bus Initiative (VA)

In August, Dominion Energy [announced an initiative](#) to replace all of Virginia's diesel-powered school buses with electric buses by 2030. The utility plans to deploy 50 electric buses by the end of 2020 and another 200 per year for the next 5 years for a total of 1,050 buses by 2025, with additional buses added in subsequent years for a full transition to e-buses by 2030. The buses' batteries will act as "grid assets," able to store excess wind and solar energy and feed it back into the system when needed. Dominion estimates that the 1,050 buses deployed by 2025 will [reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 810 million pounds](#)—the equivalent to taking 78,000 cars off the road—and save school districts 60 percent on transportation maintenance and operation costs.



1. Atlas Public Policy EV Hub Electric Utility Filings Dashboard

### **Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison, San Diego Gas & Electric, and Liberty Utilities (CA)**

Four of California's utilities announced they will be [investing \\$55 million](#) in charging stations at public schools, parks and beaches. Their plans include ensuring that 40 percent of the charging sites in the school pilots are located in disadvantaged communities and 25 percent of the sites selected for the state parks and beaches pilots serve disadvantaged communities. San Diego Gas & Electric will also deploy charging stations at city and county parks and plans to locate 100 percent of those installations within disadvantaged communities.

### **Holy Cross Energy (CO)**

In February, [Holy Cross Energy](#)—a rural electric cooperative serving about 55,000 customers in western Colorado—launched its "Charge at Home, Charge at Work" program that provides residential and commercial customers free level-2 electric vehicle chargers and covers the upfront cost of installation and ongoing maintenance of the chargers. Installation and maintenance costs are paid back by customers to the utility through a three-year fixed charge on their regular energy bills.

### **Austin Energy's EVs for Schools (TX)**

In 2019, municipal electric utility Austin Energy continued to roll out its new [EVs for Schools initiative](#)—a program that is putting EV charging stations at local schools. The stations also serve as living labs for students who can collect data and measure energy usage.

Austin Energy partnered with the Austin Independent School District, which developed a teacher kit and specialized training with STEM curriculum about EVs, green energy and sustainable mobility that is being used at participating schools. This program was [recently recognized](#) with a 2019 Smart 50 Award by Smart Cities Connect and received an honorable mention from Fast Company's World Changing Ideas Awards

### **Duke Energy (NC)**

[Duke Energy](#) filed a proposal in March to invest \$76 million in charging stations, electric buses, consumer awareness campaigns and more for an electric vehicle infrastructure pilot program in North Carolina. The program would expand the state's existing charging network and double the number of fast chargers, plus include a focus on low- and middle-income communities.

### **Xcel Energy's Residential EV Service Pilot (MN)**

Last year, Xcel Energy launched a new [Residential EV Service Pilot](#) in Minnesota and this spring reported its [initial results](#) to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The pilot offers residential customers a smart meter capable of tracking EV energy use separately from home energy use, thus allowing them to participate in Xcel's lower [off-peak charging rates for EVs](#) without having to invest in two separate meters. Xcel reports that in 2019, the 100 pilot participants saved \$219,618 in upfront costs, with an average savings of \$2,196 per customer. The utility plans to roll out this pilot to more customers in 2020.

## States

From coast to coast and from north to south, states are making it easier for people to buy, ride, charge and share EVs. Here are some examples of how states have geared up in 2019:

### California

The California Air Resources Board announced the new [Clean Mobility Options Program](#) in April 2019. This is statewide program will help deploy clean, shared mobility services in disadvantaged communities. Approximately \$17 million will be directed to communities next year, likely supporting at least 30-40 new pilot projects for sharing zero-emission cars, bikes, scooters and rides. The program is creating an entirely new community of practice among the public agencies, community-based organizations and industry partners that will be operating the services.

### Minnesota

In September, the state of Minnesota launched a rulemaking process to consider adopting a [Clean Car Standard](#), which would require auto makers to sell a certain number of low- and zero-emissions cars in the state. At the time of this action, Minnesota became the [15th state](#) to move in such a direction, following the lead of California.

### Florida

In July, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis announced the [Diesel Emissions Mitigation Program](#), which will add 1,000 charging stations along the state's turnpike and swap out diesel-powered school buses for electric ones. The plan is funded by the \$166 million the state received through the 2018 Volkswagen settlement.



### North Carolina

In October, the North Carolina Department of Transportation launched its [Zero-Emission Vehicle Plan](#) through Gov. Roy Cooper's recent executive order to lower emissions. Under the plan, NCDOT will educate the public and dealers, increase the availability of charging stations, reduce upfront costs for EVs and create policies that promote adoption. Officials plan to increase the number of registered EVs in the state to at least 80,000 by 2025.

### Colorado

In August, Colorado's Air Quality Control Commission [voted to approve](#) a zero-emissions vehicle (ZEV) mandate, at the time making it the 11th state to adopt the mandate. The law requires automakers to sell more zero-emission vehicles starting in 2023. State Air Pollution Control Division staff research estimates that the mandate would result in 4.9 percent of cars sold in Colorado in 2023 to be ZEVs, growing to 6.1 percent by 2030.

### Nevada

In May, Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak signed a bill authorizing funds for Nevada school districts to invest in [electric buses](#). Schools will work through the [Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Demonstration \(EVID\)](#) program to receive reimbursement for up to 75 percent of the cost of purchasing electric school buses and installing the infrastructure needed for their operation.

## Cities

U.S. cities are promoting transportation electrification by building out charging networks, lowering upfront costs for EVs and adopting electric fleets. Here are some city-backed initiatives and results of 2019:

### Madison, WI

In March, the city of [Madison](#) announced it will add 20 Chevy Bolts to its fleet, making it the largest electric municipal fleet in Wisconsin. The city has a goal of only purchasing hybrid or electric vehicles from now on and is working to get other Wisconsin cities to increase their electric fleet as well.

### Columbus, OH

Columbus, Ohio, is plugging away at getting the city plugged into EVs. The city was awarded a \$50 million U.S. Dept. of Transportation Smart City Challenge award in 2015, which funded the creation of the [Smart Columbus](#) program. Some of the program's [2019 accomplishments](#) include already shattering its 2020 goal for electric vehicle sales growth, nearly completing its 2020 goal of electrifying public fleets and hosting 25 ride-and-drive events.

### Greensboro, NC

In 2019, Greensboro became the first city in North Carolina to have an [all-electric bus fleet](#). Six electric buses are already operating throughout the city and four more are on order. The rechargeable buses will save the city up to \$350,000 per bus each year.



### Los Angeles, CA

In April, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti [announced](#) the city's own [Green New Deal](#), which calls for zeroing out carbon emissions from transportation by 2050. LA's EV goals are the most ambitious of any city in the country, and the city has developed several programs to achieve them, including rebates for used EVs and BlueLA—the first all-electric car-sharing program in the country aimed at lower-income residents. In addition, [LA's metro system](#) includes an electrified subway, light rail and bus fleet. Rebates for electric vehicles and home charging stations have helped the city reach about 100,000 registered EVs to date.

### Denver, CO

In September, Denver committed to joining the [GoEV City Coalition](#), which calls for fully electrifying city fleets, public transit, school buses, ride-sharing services and all passenger vehicles in the coming decades. The [Colorado GoEV City campaign](#) also created a Policy Toolkit with a list of strategies for local governments to electrify transportation.

## Flagstaff, AZ

The city of Flagstaff adopted [new building codes](#) in May 2019 requiring new parking garages with more than 19 spaces that serve multifamily, industrial or commercial buildings to have up to three “EV-ready” outlets capable of supporting EV charging stations, as well as all new single-family homes to have one EV-ready outlet installed in the garage. Additionally, [Flagstaff](#) has supported electrification by building out EV infrastructure in areas including downtown, Route 66 and the Northern Arizona University campus. Other Arizona cities adopting EV-ready building codes in 2019 include Tucson and [Sedona](#).

## Sacramento, CA

In 2017, the city of Sacramento made a “[ZEV First](#)” commitment that by 2020, 75 percent of its light-duty vehicles purchased would be electric. As of April 2019, the city’s fleet consists of approximately 50 percent alternative fuel vehicles. Of these, 51 are zero-emission vehicles (ZEV)— either all-battery EVs or hydrogen-fuel cell vehicles. Sacramento consistently ranks as one of the top green fleets in the nation. [Efforts to increase ZEVs in the fleet are ongoing](#).



## Raleigh, NC

The city of Raleigh is in the process of completing a comprehensive [Transportation Electrification Implementation Plan](#) that will address all areas impacting and impacted by the shift to electric mobility. The city worked with a team of consultants to identify actions, policies and areas for further research across a wide range of needs including charging infrastructure, fleet conversions, transit, equity and access, economic development, public/private partnerships, budget and finance, parking, IT integration, citizen engagement and more. The plan is due out by the end of the year.

Plug In America looks forward to growing the transportation electrification sector through supportive policies and programs with more utilities, states and cities, and seeing more EVs on the road in 2020.

To find out how you or your organization can help to accelerate this momentum, please contact us at [info@pluginamerica.org](mailto:info@pluginamerica.org)

Join the movement!  
[PlugInAmerica.org](http://PlugInAmerica.org)  
[@PlugInAmerica](https://twitter.com/PlugInAmerica)



[PlugStar.com](http://PlugStar.com)  
[DriveElectricWeek.org](http://DriveElectricWeek.org)  
[DriveElectricEarthDay.org](http://DriveElectricEarthDay.org)