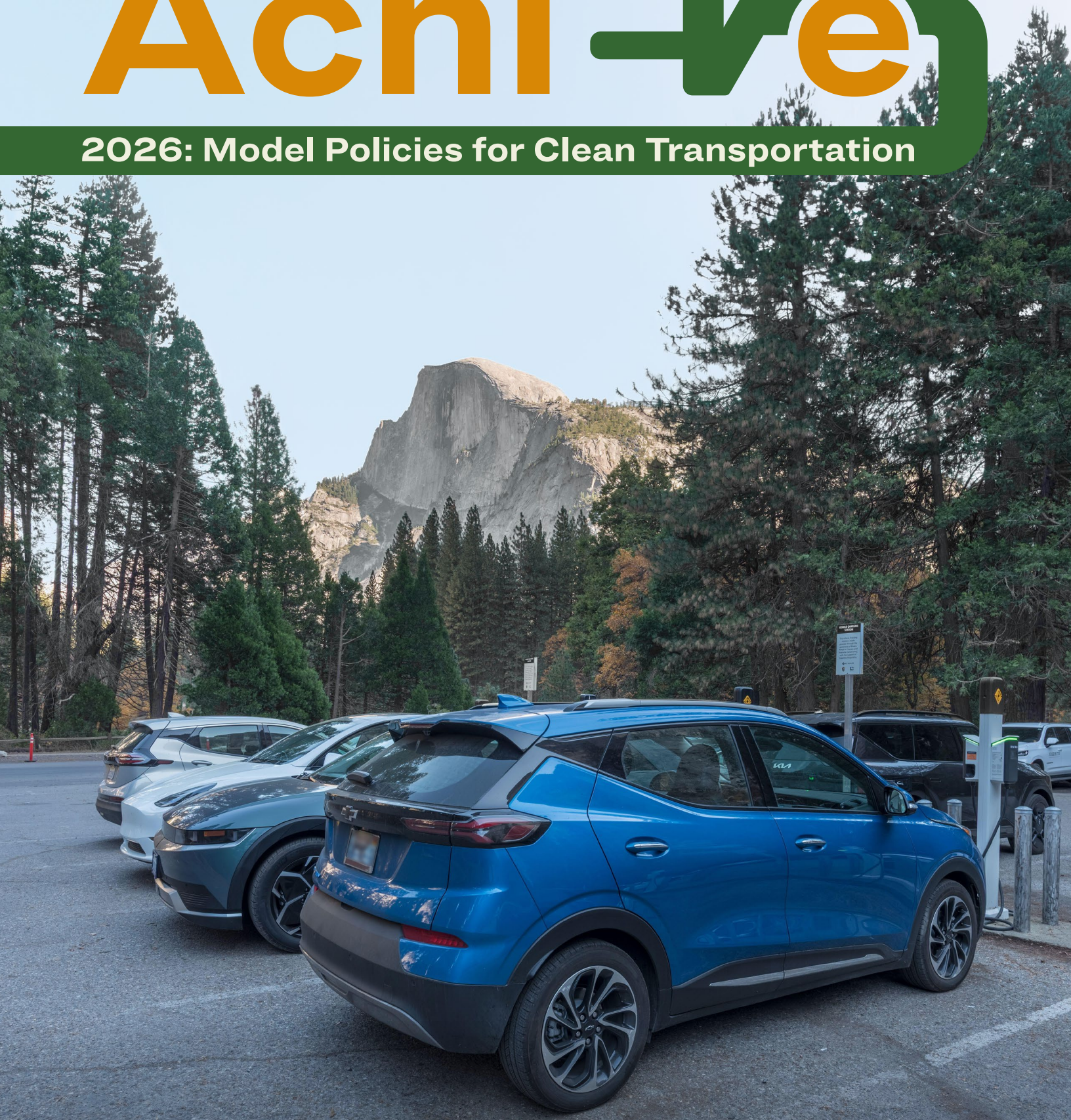
AchiEVe

2026: Model Policies for Clean Transportation



SIERRA CLUB

Electrification Coalition

Plug In America

FORTH

Table of Contents

Authors & Acknowledgements 3

Introduction 4

EVs are Driving Affordability 5

Residential charging for single-family housing residents 7

Residential charging for multi-family housing residents 8
- Shared charging 8
- Charging at dedicated parking spaces 9

Creative charging: lamppost and bring-your-own-cord 9
- Lamppost and streetlight charging 9
- Bring-your-own-cord charging 9

Portland's Master Lease Agreement for EV Charging 10

Community Support for Gig Drivers Transitioning to Electric Vehicles 10
- Financial Support and Incentives 10
- Charging Infrastructure and Savings 11
- Education and Community Building 11

Policy Ideas for Equitable Road Revenue 11
- Alternative Revenue Mechanisms 12
- Road User Charge (RUC) Programs 13
- Equity Considerations for Policy Design 13

Conclusion 13

Authors & Acknowledgements

AchiEVe 7.0 was published in 2026.

Cover photo: Leon Werdinger

Written by:

Will Drier
Electrification Coalition

Stu Green
Forth

Alexia Melendez Martineau
Ingrid Malmgren
Plug In America

Katherine Garcia
Sierra Club

Thank you:

GreenLatinos' Andrea Marpillero-Colomina for reviewing the Guide.

Acronyms:

Electric Vehicle (EV)
Master Lease Agreement (MLA)
Multi-family Housing (MFH)
National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA)
On-Board Diagnostics (OBD)
Road User Charge (RUC)
Transportation Network Company (TNC)

In partnership with:

SIERRA CLUB
Electrification Coalition
Plug In America
FORTH

Introduction

Since 2017, the transportation sector has been the **largest source** of **greenhouse gas emissions** in the **United States** and a **major contributor to air pollution.**

The recent rollbacks of vehicle emissions standards demonstrate that reducing transportation emissions is not an administrative priority. During the last year, the Trump administration has unlawfully frozen, and in some instances Congress has eliminated, federal clean transportation investments meant to spur electric vehicle (EV) domestic manufacturing and accelerate EV adoption.

Despite these recent policy shifts, there is growing demand for EVs in the U.S. and there are currently over 100 EV models commercially available. Drivers are choosing EVs because it typically costs 60% less to charge them with electricity at home than fuel a gas car. EV drivers enjoy a smoother, more powerful ride and lower maintenance costs compared to driving a gas-powered vehicle. EV drivers are consistently loyal to EVs. In fact, J.D. Power, McKinsey, Plug In America, and the Global EV Alliance driver surveys all show that over 90% of EV drivers (96% in the most recent J.D. Power Survey) plan to stick with EVs.

InfiniteFlow

Meet Jeff, an auto glass repair pro who powers his business with his EV and has saved $4,000 a month since making the switch. From running power tools on the go to skipping the oil changes, driving electric gives him the range, reliability, and freedom to keep his focus on the job.

This 2026 AchiEVe Guide identifies specific programs that state and local policymakers and utilities can use to support **transportation electrification** in their communities. It demonstrates how **state rebates, utility incentives, financing opportunities**, and the **expansion of charging options** are making it more **affordable and convenient** for drivers to switch from gas-powered cars to EVs.

EVs are Driving Affordability

Americans are facing an affordability crisis, and it's affecting our bills related to transportation, energy, and groceries. Transportation expenses such as buying a car and paying for repairs, maintenance, insurance, parking, and registration have outpaced inflation.

Transportation costs are typically the second-largest household expense after housing costs, and the volatility of gas prices make budgeting that much more difficult. EVs have a lower total cost of ownership compared to combustion engine vehicles considering electricity prices are more stable and nearly always cheaper than gasoline and EV drivers spend less on maintenance costs.

Rising transportation costs disproportionately impact low-income families, many of whom spend almost a third of their income on transportation. This is worrying because having access to transportation is directly correlated to economic mobility. Luckily, we are seeing more affordable models and an increase in available used EVs.

With five kids, four EVs, and a busy life, this family found freedom in driving electric—freedom from high fuel & maintenance costs, gas stops, and smog-filled air. For them, it's the road to a more independent and innovative future. With over $800 a month of savings, they have more to spend on their family.

Incentives have helped make driving an electric vehicle more affordable. Paired with the build-out of EV charging stations along corridors, in workplaces, and commercial spaces, it's becoming more convenient to drive an electric vehicle. And, the rate of charger reliability is going up and charging time is going down due to the technology advancements for ultra-fast chargers.

In 2025, the federal government abruptly ended the highly popular consumer tax credits for new and used vehicles. However, many states are still offering incentives for purchasing EVs, and some have even expanded the rebate amount. Prospective EV drivers should explore the programs that are available from their state, region or local utility, which can be stacked. Requirements like income, price of the vehicle, and prior participation vary by state and region.

The federal tax credit for EV charging, also known as the section 30C alternative fuel vehicle refueling property credit, is still available. It offers a rebate of up to 30% off the cost of installing EV chargers (up to $1,000) at a personal property, business, or a tax-exempt entity. The tax credit is only eligible for chargers placed in service until June 30, 2026.

An increasing number of mission-driven lenders, like green banks and credit unions, are offering favorable financing options for consumers, and even fleets, to purchase both EVs and charging infrastructure. Some of these financing options include discounted borrowing rates and extended payback periods.

The following includes a selection of states that offer incentives for purchasing new and used EVs for both consumers and businesses, affordable charging options, and favorable financing programs.

- **Connecticut:** The Connecticut Green Bank's C-PACE program allows projects to bundle EV charging equipment as a part of retrofit or new construction financing programs. Connecticut Green Bank is also piloting an aggregated carbon credit program, allowing EV charging station hosts to participate and quantify their offsets, generating additional revenue for each charging station.

  The Connecticut Green Bank has favorable financing options specifically to support the electrification of the state's school bus fleet for both consumers and businesses. The program can provide low-interest, long-term financing for any project within the state, and additional opportunities for projects in underserved communities. Project eligibility includes the buses, charging equipment, and upgrades needed for grid infrastructure.

- **Colorado:** EV CO is Colorado's EV education initiative website, which highlights the benefits of driving EVs, current state incentives, and types of convenient charging options. Colorado taxpayers are eligible for a $750 credit for the purchase or lease of a new EV with an MSRP up to $80,000, and an additional $2,500 credit for a new EV with an MSRP up to $35,000.

  The Vehicle Exchange Colorado (VXC) Program helps income-qualified Coloradans replace their old, polluting vehicles with an EV. Eligible Coloradans can receive $9,000 for a new EV or $6,000 for a used EV.

- **New Jersey:** The EV incentive program offers New Jersey residents a $1,500 incentive for the purchase or lease of a new eligible EV through the Charge Up program and an additional $2,500 for income-qualifying applicants (total incentive of $4,000) through the Charge Up+ incentive. Residents can apply for the EV incentive for their purchase or lease at the point-of-sale. New Jersey also offers up to $250 for a qualifying Level 2 charger.

- **New York:** The NY Green Bank's Clean Transportation program offers flexible financing for EV-related projects within the state. This includes light- and medium-duty electric fleet vehicles, and the required charging infrastructure. Project size must be $2 million and up. NY Green Bank can offer market-rate financing, flexible solutions, and bridge incentives.

- **Maryland:** Offered by the Montgomery County Green Bank, the Affordable Multi-Family Housing Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Program (EV-CIP) supports low-cost EV charging infrastructure deployment for up to two dual chargers at each property. This program provides a 0% bridge loan for available state and utility rebate programs and additional on-site project costs.

- **Massachusetts:** Massachusetts Offers Rebates for Electric Vehicles (MOR-EV) program offers $3,500 rebates for new or used light-duty vehicles. Income qualifying drivers can receive an additional rebate of $1,500. There is a $1,000 additional rebate for trading-in a qualifying vehicle. Rebates for new and used EVs are available at the time of purchase or lease at participating dealerships as well as after an eligible purchase or lease.

  The MOR-EV Trucks program provides rebates for pick-up trucks and Class 2b vehicles as well as Class 3-8 vehicles. The incentives are available for fleet vehicles owned by Massachusetts residents, private businesses, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and governments.

- **Michigan:** Michigan Saves, the green bank of Michigan, has pre-negotiated with local credit unions to offer flexible loan amounts and loan terms for qualified projects, including residential and commercial EV charging infrastructure projects.

- **Washington:** The EVs for EVERYONE program—a partnership between Express Credit Union and Plug In America—provides residents with lower than market-rate loans to purchase either new or used EVs.

- **Nationwide:** The Clean Energy Credit Union Electric Vehicle & Hybrid Vehicle Loan program also provides below market-rate loans (as low as 4.99% APR) and flexible lending terms with no early payback penalties.

Manufacturers can also offer EV incentives. For example, Ford's Power Promise offers a complimentary home charger and standard installation with the purchase or lease of a Ford EV. According to a Ford survey, 89 percent of EV shoppers indicated that they are more likely to choose an EV if they could charge at home. The Power Promise program provides a turnkey solution for managing each step of the EV charger installation process. Another manufacturer, Rivian, is partnering with EnergyHub to make it easier for drivers to benefit from cost savings through managed charging programs.

Residential charging for single-family housing residents

Woman plugging electric charger into car.
SouthWorks

Residents of single-family housing often have dedicated parking spots, which is a significant advantage for potential EV buyers. Knowing where a vehicle will be parked the majority of the time creates an opportunity to deploy low-cost charging solutions.

However, some homes and multi-family dwellings may be limited in their ability to deploy charging. In cases where residents have dedicated parking spaces, or live in a single-family home with their own parking spot, there are viable and straightforward Level 1 and low-cost Level 2 charging solutions that can meet the majority of EV drivers' needs.

Don't dismiss the ordinary outlet. Level 1 charging, which involves plugging your EV into a standard 120-volt outlet, is often dismissed as "trickle charging." But plugging in provides 3-5 miles of range an hour, sufficient power to recharge an EV overnight after an average daily commute of under 40 miles per day. This solution is also most likely already available, and doesn't require any additional or costly investments in an EV charger or panel/wiring upgrades.

- **California:** Peninsula Clean Energy's EV Ready program provides free technical support and incentives to landlords and property managers who add EV charging to their properties. When property owners seek technical assistance, PCE offers three design options— "good, better, and best"—and the "best" option typically includes the least expensive, lowest-level chargers.

For EV owners that need more than Level 1 charging, there are cost-effective charging solutions and incentives that may be available to overcome hurdles such as higher-cost options for Level 2 charging stations and upgrades to the electricity panel.

Low-cost solutions to avoid costly upgrades when there is limited capacity available at the panel include:

- **Consider purchasing a smart circuit splitter for an occupied NEMA outlet.** Many homes already have a dedicated 240-volt circuit for a clothes dryer or another appliance. Under the right conditions, homeowners could consider installing a safety certified smart circuit splitter, a device that automatically switches power between an appliance and the EV charger.

- **Already have an accessible NEMA outlet?** Homeowners can consider purchasing compatible EV charging plugs or plug-in wall chargers, rather than installing a hardwired EV charging station. These can also be a great solution for renters who want to be able to take their charger with them when they move.

- **Right-size your charging.** The needs of every EV owner are different, so it is important to identify how much power you actually need. If Level 1 charging is too slow, but installing an 80-amp circuit is too expensive, consider a lower-powered Level 2 charger. A 24-amp charger may be sufficient to get a full charge overnight (roughly 18-20 miles added an hour), versus installing a more expensive, higher-amp charger.

There are also many utilities that offer rebates or incentives for the installation of charging and for panel upgrades.

- **Illinois:** ComEd's Residential EV Charger and installation Rebate offers up to $1,000 for the purchase and installation of a Level 2 charger. That rebate amount is up to $2,500 in qualified low-income and equity investment eligible communities.

- **Michigan:** Consumers Energy's PowerMIDrive Home Charger Installation Rebate offers $500 for the installation of a Level 2 charger and a maximum 50-amp circuit upgrade. Income qualified customers may be eligible for up to $1,000.

Residential charging for multi-family housing residents

Affordable and reliable access to charging is crucial for EV drivers, whether for powering up for a daily commute, planning a road trip, or topping up while running errands. An estimated 80% of charging happens at home, usually in a garage or private parking space.

Residents of multi-family housing (MFH), such as apartments, condominiums, or townhouses, face additional challenges when looking for charging options. Over 30% of housing in the United States is considered multi-family, but less than 2.5% of MFH properties with parking have EV charging. To make the benefits of EVs available to residents of multi-family housing, different charging options are necessary.

Hear from an EV driver, Julio, on his experience installing a home charger at his condominium and how he was able to claim these savings.

This section focuses on residential charging solutions; nearby public charging or workplace charging can also support EV drivers in MFH residences.

Shared Charging

One solution for home charging at MFH properties is to install a set of shared chargers in parking spaces accessible by multiple residents. Typically, shared chargers are Level 2 to better serve several drivers. Depending on the property's configuration, shared chargers may simplify installation logistics.

Shared chargers can be networked or non-networked, depending on how the property and its residents plan to cover charging costs. Networked chargers are typically more expensive than non-networked chargers. For networked chargers, each driver typically pays individually for their charging session directly with an account associated with the selected charging network. With non-networked chargers, the property can charge a monthly fee for each driver using them to cover costs. Beyond covering costs, properties can set idle fees to incentivize each driver to move their car after it is done charging.

- **Ann Arbor, MI:** A city initiative called the Commercial EV Charger Program provides commercial and MFH with up to four free Level 2 chargers in their buildings.

Charging at Dedicated Parking Spaces

Another option is to install charging at dedicated parking spaces for the exclusive use of vehicles that are assigned to that parking space. This solution offers a different set of advantages in that, because each driver has exclusive access to a charger, they will dwell longer in the parking space, making Level 1 charging a more viable option. Level 1 charging can dramatically reduce installation costs while covering average daily driving needs.

- **Vermont:** Charge Vermont is a state program that provides 90-95% of the total project cost for Level 1 and Level 2 charging installations in MFH. The program funding is supported by EV registration fees.

Creative charging: lamppost and bring-your-own-cord

In cities and other densely populated areas, space and power can be hard to find. City streetscapes must accommodate many users, including pedestrians, various transit modes, bikes, and cars. Several cities are advancing innovative design strategies to increase EV charging while addressing a variety of hurdles: limited space, power capacity, cost, and installation timelines. These innovative solutions include lamppost chargers, bring-your-own cord charging models, and low-power charging options (Level 1 and low-power Level 2 charging.) Like shared residential chargers, to facilitate shared use of public charging options, idling fees can help ensure drivers park in the space only when they are actively charging.

Electric car being charged from a charging point on a street light post.
Stephen Barnes

Lamppost and Streetlight Charging

Lamppost and streetlight chargers utilize existing city infrastructure, reducing installation costs and timelines. Additionally, lamppost chargers fit with city infrastructure to maximize valuable space and provide charging solutions where they are needed, since many drivers rely on street parking.

- **New York:** NY is working to convert lampposts across the city into lamppost EV chargers.
- **Los Angeles:** LA is another example of a city that has implemented an innovative strategy. LA partnered with FLO EV Charging to install EV chargers on streetlights across the city. These chargers utilize excess available power inside streetlights, again reducing installation timelines and costs.

Bring-Your-Own-Cord Charging

The bring-your-own-cord model offers several advantages, including providing options for drivers with different onboard connector ports and avoiding complex cable management systems. Chargers can also take up less curbside space. Bring-your-own cord charging is just as easy as having a convenience charging cable (often given to buyers with the vehicle) sitting in the trunk. Further, bring-your-own cord charging inherently limits the use of the infrastructure to the intended audience of EV drivers. Bring-your-own cord charging is popular in Europe and growing in popularity in the US.

New York is home to a company called itselectric, which utilizes the bring your own cord model for EV charging. For drivers, the process is simple: sign up and itselectric will send you a free cord to use at their chargers. An additional benefit to the itselectric model is that the chargers are powered with spare capacity from nearby buildings, avoiding the need for an additional utility connection and reducing installation timelines. These chargers are already available in Boston, MA, San Francisco, CA, Los Angeles, CA, Alameda, CA, Washington, D.C., Detroit, MI, Newburgh, NY, Jersey City, NJ, and Yonkers, NY.

There are many cities considering these solutions. In addition to Los Angeles and New York City, Oak Park (IL), Kansas City, San Francisco, Boston, Detroit, and Jersey City have all decided to move forward with an innovative curbside charging solution.

CREATIVE CHARGING EXAMPLE:

Portland's Master Lease Agreement for EV Charging

Portland's strategy creates a program to serve the needs of city land owners, charging providers, and private vehicle owners.

Portland's Master Lease Agreement (MLA) creates a streamlined framework for EV charging companies to lease locations in the public right-of-way to install Level 2 chargers. The MLA addresses a critical barrier to EV adoption: lack of home charging access for renters and residents without garages. The agreement ensures equitable distribution across Portland's neighborhoods and establishes standards for equipment, maintenance, data sharing, and insurance.

Key Features

- **Equity-Centered Design:** The MLA requires participating companies to distribute chargers into neighborhoods currently underserved by existing EV infrastructure. Chargers are permitted in many commercial centers, but the MLA excludes certain areas where charging is disproportionately developed.
- **Operational Standards:** Companies must maintain strict uptime and maintenance standards with clear processes for outage reporting. Chargers must be installed on Local Service Traffic Streets and mounted on free-standing pedestals or existing utility poles, with adjacent parking designated as "EV charging only."

Resources

Electric Vehicle Charging in the Public Right-of-Way
Information for Companies Seeking to Install EV Chargers in the Public Right-of-Way

Community Support for Gig Drivers Transitioning to Electric Vehicles

Young people entering a car to get a shared ride. *supersizer*

Communities across North America are developing innovative programs to help gig economy drivers make the switch to electric vehicles. This section outlines key support strategies and links to existing programs.

Financial Support and Incentives

Gig drivers often face unique financial barriers to EV adoption, including variable income that makes qualifying for traditional auto loans difficult, concerns about upfront costs, and uncertainty about whether EVs pencil out financially given their driving patterns. These programs address these challenges by offering direct cash incentives tied to platform performance, flexible short-term leasing options that minimize commitment, and rental programs that allow drivers to test EVs in real-world conditions before making a purchase decision.

Platform Incentives & Financing Programs

- **Uber Go Electric Program:** Up to $4,000 for Platinum and Diamond drivers who switch to an EV and complete 100 rides by December 31, 2026.

- **Lyft Weekly EV Bonus:** $55 extra per week for completing 50 rides in an electric vehicle.

- **Ford Drive with Uber:** Flexible weekly lease options (1-4 months) for Mustang Mach-E models in select California markets. Rent or Buy a Rideshare Car to Drive and Earn.

State and Utility Incentives and Programs

- **Ride Clean Mass:** Funded by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, the state offers rebates of up to $14,000 on top of other state incentives to help vehicle-for-hire drivers switch to electric vehicles. The program's goal is to get 600-900 EVs on the road by 2027.

- **Burlington Electric Department in Vermont:** Offers increased incentives for high-mileage drivers to purchase new or used EVs. For income-eligible commuters, food-delivery and ride-hailing service drivers who drive over 17,600 miles a year, additional incentives of between $1,000 and $1,500 are available.

Charging Infrastructure and Savings

Access to convenient, affordable charging is critical for gig drivers who cannot afford downtime and may drive significantly more miles than typical EV owners. Unlike personal vehicle owners who can charge overnight at home, many gig drivers need access to fast charging during their shifts to maximize earnings. High public charging costs can quickly erode the fuel savings EVs offer, making discounted charging programs essential to the economics of EV adoption for gig work. These programs reduce per-kilowatt-hour costs, provide time-of-use incentives for off-peak charging, and create dedicated charging infrastructure in high-traffic gig locations.

Charging Network Discounts

- **Uber-EVgo Partnership:** Significantly reduced rates for rideshare drivers at 850+ fast charging locations for Gold, Platinum, and Diamond status drivers.

- **Lyft-EVgo & Electrify America Partnerships:** Significantly reduced rates for rideshare drivers at a variety of charging platforms.

- **Additional financial incentives:** Some credit cards provide a cash back percentage from using public charging stations, allowing drivers to earn additional savings on business expenses.

Education and Community Building

Many gig drivers have questions about whether EVs can work for their specific driving patterns, income needs, and lifestyle. Common concerns include range anxiety, charging time cutting into earning hours, and whether the investment pencils out. Peer support and practical tools help drivers make informed decisions based on real-world experience from other gig workers rather than manufacturer claims or general consumer advice. Test programs and short-term rentals allow drivers to validate EV viability for their specific routes and schedules before committing to a purchase, reducing the financial risk of adoption.

Peer Support & Decision Tools

- **Platform Driver Communities:** In-app forums and resources connecting experienced EV drivers with those considering the switch.

- **Charger Availability and Battery Monitoring:** Real-time insights on charger availability and vehicle charge allow drivers to stay within range and manage charging stops efficiently (features available in app and vary by rideshare platform).

- **Platform Savings Calculators:** Tools showing potential fuel and maintenance savings specific to gig work.

Test Drive Programs

- **Short-term EV Rentals:** Weekly and monthly rental options are sometimes available through rideshare platform partners and allow for low-risk EV trials before purchase. Most major rideshare platforms offer rental options directly or through a partner company.

Policy Ideas for Equitable Road Revenue

Our transportation system faces a growing funding gap and needs a long-term, sustainable solution. Today, it relies heavily on motor fuel taxes that have not kept pace with the cost of maintaining and improving infrastructure. These shortfalls are driven primarily by the failure to index fuel taxes to inflation, steady improvements in vehicle fuel economy, and more recently, the rise of electric vehicles.

To close this gap, durable funding approaches that ensure all road users contribute fairly to the system are necessary. These approaches should incentivize efficiency, including by rewarding consumers for

choosing highly efficient vehicles. They should also address equity concerns, particularly for low-income drivers and rural communities, and avoid placing disproportionate burdens on those least able to pay.

Funding mechanisms should also be transparent, simple to administer, and designed to maintain incentives for cleaner, more efficient transportation choices. And because traditional vehicle fees and taxes can be regressive, it is appropriate to consider supplementing them with state general fund revenues, which are often more progressive and can help ensure a fairer overall funding system.

Alternative Revenue Mechanisms

Beyond mileage-based fees, states are implementing diverse approaches to supplement declining gas tax revenues. These mechanisms vary in their equity implications, with some creating more progressive structures than others. Policymakers must balance revenue needs with fairness considerations, particularly for rural residents who drive more miles and lower-income households for whom transportation costs represent a larger share of income.

Electric Vehicle Registration Fees

- Thirty-three states impose additional registration fees on EVs, typically ranging from $50 to $400 annually, with revenue generally funding transportation infrastructure.
- Flat fees can be regressive and may disproportionately burden lower-income EV owners relative to their road use.
- Fees should be designed to be equivalent across fuel types; for example, EV drivers should not pay more than the equivalent gas tax.

Indexed and Variable Fuel Taxes

- Sales tax approach (Hawaii, Illinois, and Indiana); taxing based on alternative metrics, such as population (North Carolina) or vehicle efficiency standards (Georgia); or, inflation-indexed gas taxes that automatically adjust (Michigan, California).
- Maintains existing infrastructure and captures revenue from gas vehicles.
- Can disproportionately affect rural and lower-income drivers who rely on older, less efficient vehicles.

Tolling and Congestion Pricing

- State and local tolling programs, including approaches like Indiana's 2025 authorization to toll all interstate highways, and congestion pricing that charges higher rates during peak travel times in urban areas.
- Can manage traffic demand and generate substantial revenue in high-traffic corridors.
- May create barriers for low-income workers commuting during peak hours; requires exemptions or discounts for vulnerable populations.

A handful of states have found a practical way to fund EV programs that doesn't depend on budget appropriations or one-time federal dollars: small fees on deliveries and ride-hail trips, redirected toward clean vehicle programs.

Colorado's approach to revenue generation runs two parallel funding streams at once. The state's Retail Delivery Fee applies to motor vehicle deliveries of taxable goods and earmarks portions of every transaction for fleet electrification grants, public transit charging infrastructure, and EV incentives for lower-income residents. The state also charges a separate Prearranged Ride Fee on every rideshare trip, with revenue flowing into the same Clean Fleet Enterprise fund. That fund supports competitive grants to public and private fleets replacing gas vehicles with EVs, and has a dedicated TNC-specific grant program that puts those ride-fee dollars back into the hands of the drivers who generated them. The ride fee also builds in a direct incentive to go electric: EV trips are charged at roughly half the standard rate, cutting the per-ride cost for drivers who've already made the switch.

Road User Charge (RUC) Programs

Road user charge programs, also known as mileage-based user fees (MBUF) collect revenue based on miles driven rather than fuel consumed, creating a more direct connection between road use and payment. This approach addresses the declining effectiveness of gas taxes as vehicles become more efficient and electrified. Well-designed RUC programs can be more equitable than flat registration fees because they charge based on actual road use, and they can incorporate income-based discounts or exemptions to protect low-income drivers.

Active State Programs

- **Oregon OReGO:** The nation's first permanent RUC program, established in 2015, charges 2.0 cents per mile for voluntary participants who drive vehicles with 20 MPG or greater fuel efficiency.
- **Utah Road Usage Charge:** EV drivers can choose between a flat fee of $143.25 or pay 1.11 cents per mile (capped at $143.25), with mileage reported via odometer photos or telematics.
- **Hawaii HiRUC:** Launched July 2025, EV owners pay either $8 per 1,000 miles (0.8 cents per mile, capped at $50) or a flat $50 annual fee, with odometers read at annual safety inspections. The program becomes mandatory for EVs in 2028 and plans to expand to all light-duty vehicles by 2033.
- **Virginia Mileage Choice Program:** Established in 2020, drivers of vehicles with 25+ MPG fuel efficiency can voluntarily pay 1.14 cents per mile instead of the highway use fee, tracked via an On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) plug-in device.

Equity Considerations for Policy Design

Ensuring equitable road revenue requires intentional policy design that considers impacts on different income levels, geographic regions, and transportation needs. Research shows low-income drivers pay more per mile under the current gas tax compared to high-income drivers due to less efficient, older vehicles, making it critical that new revenue mechanisms don't exacerbate this disparity. Well-designed programs can actually improve equity by offering income-based discounts, charging only for actual use, and ensuring all drivers contribute proportionally.

Key Equity Principles

- **Income-based adjustments:** Offer reduced rates or caps for low-income households to prevent transportation costs from becoming a barrier to employment or essential services.
- **Geographic fairness:** Account for different travel patterns between urban and rural areas; rural residents often have fewer transportation alternatives and must drive longer distances.
- **Privacy protection:** Provide non-GPS mileage tracking options to address privacy concerns while maintaining program participation.
- **Revenue neutrality during transitions:** Cap or phase in new fees to ensure drivers don't pay significantly more during the shift from gas taxes to alternative mechanisms.
- **Transparent use of funds:** Clearly demonstrate how revenues improve roads and infrastructure in communities that pay the fees.

Alexa drives two hours home from college every weekend to see her parents. By driving electric, she skips the gas station and the student-budget stress. For her mom, Emma, it's a relief knowing her daughter is in a safe, reliable, and low-maintenance vehicle that always gets her home. Spanish Only Version.

Conclusion

This AchiEVe Guide illustrates how business owners, parents, and students are saving money by driving an EV. The strategies outlined in this AchiEVe Guide will help state and local governments increase EV deployment, resulting in improved air quality and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Policymakers can use these examples to ensure more drivers in their communities can enjoy the economic benefits of switching to electric vehicles. We need an all-hands-on-deck effort from government, utilities, and advocates to accelerate EV adoption, both effectively and equitably.

SIERRA CLUB

Sierra Club National
2101 Webster Street,
Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612
(415) 977-5500

Sierra Club Legislative
50 F Street NW, Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 547-1141

sierraclub.org
facebook.com/SierraClub
instagram.com/SierraClub
linkedin.com/company/SierraClub

Electrification Coalition

1111 19th Street NW, Suite 406
Washington, DC 20036

electrificationcoalition.org

Plug In America

1270 S Alfred St #351268
Los Angeles, CA 90035-9668

pluginamerica.org

FORTH

411 NW Park Avenue, Suite 201
Portland, OR 97209

forthmobility.org