



Case Study

Village of Millbrook

Location: Town of Washington
Town Hall

Industry: Municipal

Project type: EV Make Ready



PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Chargers installed: Two level two chargers, two plugs each.

*Incentive: **90%** of electrical infrastructure costs needed to support chargers.*



Contractor: Lynkwell

Location: Schenectady, NY

The Dilemma

Village of Millbrook trustee Victoria Contino faced a challenge. After learning about incentives available for installing electric vehicle (EV) chargers at a New York State Conference of Mayors meeting in early 2021, Contino was convinced of their potential benefit for Millbrook. She brought the idea to members of the Millbrook Business Association, who agreed the chargers would benefit the local economy. The little village has a vibrant downtown and an out-sized reputation as a tourist destination. Its not so little problem? Finding a location. Neither the village nor the business association owned any property appropriate for siting the chargers.

Charging Forward

The solution emerged from a collaborative effort. Contino, Mayor Tim Collopy, Millbrook Business Association President Buffy Arbogast, and other supporters initiated a campaign to find a suitable site. Their persistence paid off when Robert Audia, a councilman for the Town of Washington, became involved. Audia, who had sold EVs and installed an EV charger at a dealership he'd owned just outside the village, was a strong advocate for the cause. This partnership between the Village of Millbrook and the Town of Washington led to the installation of four chargers at the Town Hall, demonstrating a successful village and town collaboration to overcome logistical challenges.

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The chargers have been good for business, as they are used frequently by visitors who engage in economic activity in the village.



Incentives Provide the Spark

Initially, some weren't sure that there was enough demand to justify the cost of installing EV chargers. The incentives provided by Central Hudson, which covered 90% of the supporting infrastructure cost (\$27,600), were instrumental in convincing the municipalities to move forward. In addition, Livingston Energy covered the remaining installation costs, aside from site preparation, in exchange for receiving the revenue from the chargers under a five-year contract. "[The incentives were] ultimately key to approval because they virtually eliminated the financial risk to our municipality," said Contino.

Businesses and municipalities have various options when it comes to pricing. Some, like Millbrook, may choose to partner with another entity to limit costs. Others may choose to use charging stations as a source of revenue or as a free amenity.

Hot Spots

Once the chargers were installed, the question remained: Would they be used? Well, the results are in, and the answer is a resounding yes. "[The chargers] are already in regular use and the average charger visit is nearly three hours," said Contino. "We believe that means that many of these folks are engaged in economic activity in Millbrook during that time." In addition to those patronizing downtown businesses, other users of the charging stations include renters, town employees, and others who work in the area.

Advice for Other Municipalities

Making the EV chargers accessible to residents, employees, and visitors was a strategic decision aimed at supporting the community's diverse needs. Contino emphasized the importance of site selection. "Choose a site that is accessible by foot to employers, shops, restaurants, apartment buildings," she said. "The level 2 chargers take several hours. Drivers will have to find something productive to do while they charge."

Conclusion

This EV charger project illustrates the power of community collaboration, strategic problem-solving, and the effective leveraging of incentives to overcome initial reluctance. The result is a positive public good that provides much-needed infrastructure for local EV drivers and tourists alike, boosting the local economy and enhancing the community's sustainability credentials, while providing a model for other communities to follow.

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