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Cal Poly Drives Electric Car Use with Fleet of Charging Stations

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly will install 12 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations by the first of next year, funded by a \$150,000 grant from the California Energy Commission (CEC). The initiative is part of a broad vision of sustainability for the campus, improving what is already considered one of the best alternative transportation programs in the state.

"I think this will significantly increase the adoption of electric vehicles on campus and beyond," said Dale Dolan, an electrical engineering professor who is project manager for the initiative. "Many people have been waiting to purchase an EV until the charging infrastructure is in place, although the number of EV drivers here and elsewhere is already growing."

Cal Poly's being a major regional hub, large employer and near two heavily traveled highways was the perfect trifecta, said Dennis Elliot, assistant director of energy, utilities and sustainability for facility services. "We hit all three of the CEC's goals, which made our submission unique."

"As a university, we are a major destination — whether it's to attend the Performing Arts Center, sports events or classes," said Dolan. "And as one of the area's largest employers, Cal Poly is using the initiative to help pave the way for electric car usage in the local workforce."

The charging stations may also help promote EV usage throughout the state. Cal Poly's location on the Highway 101 corridor between Los Angeles and San Francisco makes it easily accessible for county residents and travelers alike. The campus is also bordered by scenic Highway 1.

"Charging stations promote usage," Karen Webb, interim vice president for administration and finance. "Infrastructure like this becomes part of a larger network. It reassures those who drive an electric car — or may be considering buying one — that there are an increasing number of easily accessible places to recharge their battery. It's a value statement from the university."

The new charging stations will better meet the needs of a new generation of users, said Cindy Campbell, associate director of the University Police Department (UPD), who also manages alternative transportation on campus.

"We've been passionate about alternative transportation for more than 20 years," said Campbell. "Our public transit ridership is wildly successful, even on a national scale, and our van pools are the largest successful independently operated system in the UC and CSU systems."

"With the growing number of EVs on the road, now's a perfect time for Cal Poly to deploy an infrastructure to power this new generation of high technology, energy-efficient vehicles. all part of our goal to expand options and support innovative technologies that encourage sustainable transportation choices."

The charging stations will be located at two sites: the Grand Avenue parking

structure next to the Performing Arts Center and in a parking area near Kennedy Library that hosts Zip Car parking and interfaces with the public bus system. Both locations have easy access to the Highway 1 and 101 corridors.

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