

Policy Briefing Summary

City Council



Regarding:	Resolution to Transfer Additional Funds for Electric School Buses in the amount of \$10,032 (2nd reading)
Staff Contact(s):	Kristel Riddervold, Director of the Office of Sustainability, Tray Biasioli, Climate Program Specialist
Presenter:	Kristel Riddervold, Director of the Office of Sustainability
Date of Proposed Action:	September 2, 2025

Issue

In August 2024, City Council appropriated funding, anticipated in the sum of \$420,000, for rebates awarded to the City of Charlottesville by the US Environmental Protection Agency. The final rebate amount received was \$409,968 as the wheelchair lift component ended up costing less than the allowable rebate limit. The purchase order for the buses used the anticipated rebate amount. The City of Charlottesville's Office of Sustainability proposes for the Climate Initiative Fund to contribute \$10,032 to cover this funding gap in support of this project, given that piloting battery electric school buses is a climate initiative.

Background / Rule

In late May 2024, the City of Charlottesville was notified that its application for rebates was selected for \$420,000 in funding through the EPA's Clean School Bus (CSB) program, consisting of \$400,000 toward two electric school buses (ESBs) and \$20,000 toward a single wheelchair lift. This program was established as part of the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and provides funding for replacement of diesel-fueled buses with no- or low-emission school buses. The acquisition of these ESBs directly supports the City's sustainability and climate goals.

Analysis

Climate Action is a strategic outcome area of the City's Strategic Plan and the Climate Action Plan is part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Incorporation of ESBs into the Pupil Transportation fleet will advance climate action (it is called out in Chapter 6 of the Climate Action Plan), improve student and bus driver health through elimination of diesel tailpipe emissions, and provide students an opportunity to learn about clean transportation technologies.

Two ESBs were ordered in November 2024 with anticipated delivery in Fall 2025. One of the two buses is equipped with an ADA-compliant wheelchair lift, the cost of which was less than the automatically populated rebate request amount.

The charging infrastructure required to support these ESBs will be provided through the Dominion Energy Electric School Bus Charging Program. Dominion Energy is supporting the EPA Clean School Bus Program by offering charging solutions to help EPA funding recipients. These offerings include utility coordination, grid upgrades, construction, and charger installation. The buses are all electric and so can be used as portable batteries. When not in use, they can be tapped as an energy resource through vehicle-to-grid technology. When energy demands are high or if energy resources are intermittent, the batteries in electric school buses can be tapped to help stabilize the grid and meet customer demands. An extended battery warranty was required in order to participate in this program.

Financial Impact

There is no additional budgetary impact to the City. The funding contribution would come from the previously appropriated CIP Climate Initiative Funds.

Recommendation

Staff recommends City Council adopted the attached Resolution.

Recommended Motion (if Applicable)

“I move to adopt the attached Resolution allocating \$10,032 in Climate Initiative Funds to support Electric School Bus acquisition.”

Attachments

1. EPA Rebate Funding Transfer Resolution