

Policy Briefing Summary

City Council



Regarding:	Fleet and Equipment Replacement Program and Phased Electric Vehicle Transition
Staff Contact(s):	Mike Crowley, Kristel Riddervold, Director of the Office of Sustainability
Presenter:	Steven Hicks, Director of Public Works
Date of Proposed Action:	November 2, 2026

Issue

The City of Charlottesville, Virginia's ("City"), Fleet and Equipment Replacement Program ("Program") takes a responsible, phased approach to maintaining dependable vehicles and equipment while advancing the City's climate goals. Replacement decisions are based on condition, safety, reliability, service needs, and cost, not age or mileage alone. Fleet has reviewed the FY26–FY31 replacement schedule to identify opportunities for electric vehicles (EVs) and the charging infrastructure needed to support them. Updated projections identify twenty-four (24) EV acquisitions for FY28–FY30. The schedule guides recommendations and investment over time, without committing the City to a full fleet conversion within a short period.

Background / Rule

Fleet Maintenance keeps the City's vehicles and equipment safe, reliable, and available for daily operations. The Division has twelve (12) full-time positions and maintains approximately 710 vehicles and pieces of equipment through preventive maintenance, inspections, repairs, and service scheduling.

The City's fleet currently includes fourteen (14) EVs: one (1) Capital Development vehicle, three (3) Facilities Maintenance vehicles, one (1) Fire vehicle, one (1) Neighborhood Development Services vehicle, one (1) Office of Sustainability vehicle, one (1) Parks & Recreation vehicle, two (2) Police vehicles, two (2) school buses, and two (2) Transit buses. This inventory includes the two (2) recently delivered Transit buses anticipated to enter service in fall 2026. A recent Cadmus Fleet Electrification Study ("Study") reviewed 588 vehicles within the broader inventory, including 341 light-duty vehicles and 247 medium and heavy-duty vehicles.

The proposed Fleet and Equipment Replacement Policy ("Policy") covers general service, public safety, emergency, commercial, and specialized vehicles and equipment. It establishes a consistent process for evaluating age, mileage, condition, repair history, safety, and operational requirements, with replacement criteria appropriate to each type of asset. For general light-duty vehicles, ten (10) years or 150,000 miles are review points, not automatic replacement deadlines. Vehicles may remain in service longer when safe, reliable, and cost-effective or be replaced sooner when condition or service needs warrant it. The Policy also supports selecting the appropriate vehicle for the work and reassigning underused assets before purchasing replacements.

The original FY26–FY31 Capital Plan Schedule identified forty-five (45) potential EV replacements, providing context for earlier purchases and planned replacements through FY31. Updated projections identify nine (9) EV acquisitions in FY28, ten (10) in FY29, and five (5) in FY30. Identifying a vehicle as a potential EV replacement does not mean it needs immediate replacement. Vehicles that remain

safe, reliable, and in good condition will continue in service, with EV options considered when replacement is warranted. These projections update the earlier schedule rather than add to it.

Alongside the planned EV purchases, the FY28 Program includes requests for public safety vehicles, school buses, work trucks, and heavy equipment. These requests reflect the broader responsibility to maintain dependable vehicles and equipment across City operations. Each request will be evaluated through the City's annual Budget process based on condition, utilization, and service needs.

These projections update the earlier schedule rather than add to it. The FY26–FY31 schedule also informed the proposed FY28 Capital Improvement Program ("CIP") request for charging infrastructure, including the number of chargers and priority locations needed to support existing and planned EVs. City Staff will continue coordinating replacement timing and charging needs as Departmental requirements and budgets are reviewed.

This year, the City placed three (3) take-home EVs into service for public safety use. These vehicles provide practical experience with range, charging, reliability, and performance under daily operating conditions.

Electrification progress extends beyond the light-duty fleet. Two (2) battery-electric school buses have been in service since January 2026. The City received \$409,968 through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus Program to assist with the purchase, and Dominion Energy's Electric School Bus Infrastructure Program provided the charging equipment. Installation of the dedicated Transit charging equipment has been completed. In addition to the two (2) recently delivered buses, two (2) more battery-electric Transit buses are anticipated for delivery by April 2027.

Analysis

The City's climate goals are to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions to forty-five percent (45%) below 2011 levels by 2030 and reach carbon neutrality by 2050. Fleet electrification contributes to those goals. A phased approach supports continued progress, while maintaining reliable services and addressing the needs of the entire fleet.

The City does not replace its entire fleet at one (1) time. Vehicles and equipment have different ages, conditions, workloads, and useful lives. Keeping serviceable assets in operation avoids unnecessary purchases and spreads replacement costs over time. When an asset is due for replacement, Fleet and the operating Department compare available options based on the work performed, mileage, operating schedule, reliability, charging needs, environmental benefits, and cost over its useful life.

The updated FY28–FY30 projections include sedans, SUVs, pickup trucks, and full-size work vans across multiple Departments. Vehicle purchases must be coordinated with charging infrastructure and funding, so each vehicle can be placed into dependable service when delivered. Planning considers where vehicles park, the time available for charging, and daily service demands. This work proceeds alongside replacement planning for the rest of the fleet. Refuse trucks, and other specialized equipment, must meet requirements for load capacity, operating hours, and service demands. Available EV models and charging arrangements may not yet meet every requirement. Where an EV is not practical, Fleet will recommend an appropriate hybrid or fuel-efficient conventional replacement, while continuing to evaluate electric alternatives.

The Study informs these decisions; it does not establish a limit on future EV adoption. Vehicles outside the near-term EV schedule remain part of the regular replacement Program and remain eligible for future EV consideration. Recommendations will be updated as technology, vehicle availability, pricing, charging capacity, and funding opportunities change.

Financial Impact

The projected purchase cost for the twenty-four (24) EVs identified for FY28–FY30 totals \$1,204,000:

FY28: Nine (9) vehicles totaling \$456,000, including sedans or small SUVs, two (2) full-size work vans, and three (3) pickup trucks;

FY29: Ten (10) vehicles totaling \$483,000, including sedans or SUVs and five (5) pickup trucks; and

FY30: Five (5) vehicles totaling \$265,000, including sedans or SUVs and two (2) full-size work vans.

Additional FY28 vehicle and equipment requests total \$2,438,000. These include two (2) Sheriff's vehicles, one (1) mini-excavator, one (1) tandem dump truck, one (1) E-450 van, one (1) wheel loader, eleven (11) marked Police vehicles, nine (9) unmarked Police vehicles, one (1) F-450 truck, and three (3) school buses. The total also includes \$180,000 for Fire Department vehicles and/or equipment.

Combined with the \$456,000 projected for nine (9) EVs, the identified FY28 vehicle and equipment requests total \$2,894,000. This total excludes charging infrastructure and represents acquisition requests rather than the Division's full Maintenance and Operating Budget.

These figures represent projected EV purchase costs, not the additional cost above comparable fuel-powered replacements. Final acquisitions and expenditures remain subject to Budget approval, vehicle availability, Departmental needs, and pricing at the time of purchase.

EV purchase costs vary by vehicle type. The Study estimated that an electric passenger car could cost approximately \$1,500 more than a comparable fuel-powered vehicle, while a large electric SUV could cost approximately \$18,000 more. These examples provide context for potential purchase premiums; they are not current quotes or a uniform premium across the projected acquisitions. Lower energy and maintenance expenses may offset part of the investment over time. The Study presented life-cycle cost analysis estimating that replacement with EVs would yield an average of \$2,800 in savings per vehicle over a ten (10)-year period. The extent of those savings depends on the vehicle, mileage, charging costs, and operating conditions. Financial savings are not a requirement for every EV purchase. Fleet will compare acquisition, operating, and charging costs alongside service needs and environmental benefits, so each recommendation identifies the investment needed to support the City's climate goals.

A separate FY28 CIP request includes approximately \$390,000 for charging infrastructure at additional City fleet locations: \$225,000 for approximately seventeen (17) Level Two (2) chargers and \$165,000 for one (1) fast charger. Design costs for the fast charger are excluded from this estimate and are expected to be covered through previously approved funding. The charging request will be evaluated separately through the CIP process and is not included in the \$2,894,000 vehicle and equipment total.

The vehicle projections and charging estimates do not represent the full cost of the City's EV transition. Purchases and infrastructure investments will be coordinated through the annual Budget process alongside other fleet and equipment replacement needs. The City will continue pursuing grants and other outside funding to reduce local costs.

Recommendation

None. This item is presented to City Council for information and discussion.

Recommended Motion (if Applicable)

Not applicable. No Motion required.

Attachments

1. Fleet EV Council Work Session 11 2 26