

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

RFP EM-033-2024: Level 2 Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers: Regional Service Centers

Last Revised 11/26/2024, 11:00 a.m.

Q1: Each proposed site must have at least four (4) Level 2 ports. Is there a maximum number of Level 2 ports per site?

A1: No. There is no maximum limit of Level 2 ports per site/location/station.

Q2: Who is eligible to apply?

A2: This RFP is open to entities interested in installing, owning, operating, and maintaining Level 2 EV chargers. Any number of entities can partner to submit a proposal(s). For example, a property owner can partner with an EV supply equipment contractor to submit a proposal(s).

Q3: May an applicant use in-house services?

A3: Yes. Personnel costs from local governments, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions require certified payroll(s).

Q4: Are screen displays required?

A4: No. Screen displays are not required.

Q5: Is creating a new utility account(s) for these charging projects required or can projects use an existing utility account(s)?

A5: Projects can use existing utility accounts so long as federal utility and data reporting requirements can be met. See [Rider A](#) to the Terms and Conditions for details.

Q6: Are applicants who would like to add chargers to a site with existing equipment eligible?

A6: Yes.

Q7: Is power sharing sufficient to meet the 6 kW per port requirement if the port is capable of providing 6 kW but the intelligent charging system allocates less for certain periods of charging, depending on the electrical load burden placed on the charging cluster? Alternatively, does every port have to provide 6 kW at all times?

A7: Each port must be able to always deliver 6 kW, even when multiple vehicles are charging simultaneously.

Q8: “Projects intending to charge users fee(s) to access the property are ineligible” means that EV chargers cannot be located in a public parking lot that charges parking fees?

A8: This RFP was amended to allow projects intending to charge users fee(s) to access the property. Price structure including any other fees in addition to the price for electricity to charge must be clearly displayed and explained in the application. If consumers will be required to pay an entrance fee or parking fee (e.g., in a public parking lot) that is in addition to the price (\$/kWh) to charge the vehicle, this fact must be clearly indicated in the application and the amount of the additional fee must be noted.

Q9: Is this funding stackable with other federal, state, and regional incentives?

A9: Yes.

Q10: Is this funding intended for light-, medium-, or heavy-duty vehicle use?

A10: This funding is intended for Level 2 chargers serving light-duty vehicles, but chargers funded through this program do not have to be restricted to only light-duty vehicle use.

Q11: Does each charging site need at least one ADA-compliant parking spot to be considered eligible?

A11: Yes. Section g(iii) of the “[NEVI] Standards and Requirements” section of [Rider A](#) requires that projects meet ADA regulations. The [U.S. Access Board’s “Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations”](#) requires at least one ADA-compliant charging space for all EV charging stations, and potentially more than one ADA-compliant space for projects with more than 25 charging spaces.

Q12: Would Efficiency Maine consider applications for both Level 2 and Level 3 chargers at the same site? For example, could a bidder be awarded funds for an application to the Regional Service Centers Level 2 RFP and the CFI Corridors DCFC RFP, with all chargers located at the same property?

A12: Yes. The applicant must provide a separate response for each RFP, and each application must meet the requirements of the RFP to which it is responding.

Q13: Can funds from this RFP be used to replace electrical wires for an existing charging station?

A13: No, this funding cannot be used for upgrades to existing equipment, including replacing wires.

Q14: Can funds from this RFP be used to pay for chargers that were installed before the RFP was released?

A14: Per Section 3.5, "Costs incurred prior to the RFP Opening are ineligible." However, proposals for additional chargers at the same location as existing chargers are acceptable.

Q15: Are there any geographic eligibility requirements for where in Maine these projects can be installed?

A15: Yes. See RFP Section 3.1 Eligible Locations.

Q16: What is a regional service center?

A16: For the purposes of this RFP, Regional Service Centers are towns designated by the U.S. Census Bureau as “rural” that residents rely on, especially rural residents, for goods and services as well as employment opportunities. See RFP Section 3.1 Eligible Locations.

Q17: Are applications considered confidential?

A17: No.

Q18: The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Standards and Requirements state that “Unless charging is permanently provided for free of charge to customers, charging stations must: ... Provide for secure payment methods, accessible to persons with disabilities, which at a minimum shall include a contactless payment method that...Not require a membership for use” ([NEVI Standards and Requirements](#)). Can this requirement be achieved via an app?

A18: Yes.

Q19: If the parking area does not allow overnight parking, would this project be considered eligible?

A19: No. Per the RFP, “Charging stations must be available for use and accessible to the public year-round, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

Q20: Can applicants apply for the Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers?

A20: Yes, but installation must begin by October 1, 2024, and projects cannot start before receiving approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Per the [Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers](#), “The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is establishing a temporary public interest waiver to waive Buy America requirements for steel, iron, manufactured products, and construction materials in electric vehicle (EV) chargers. This short-term, temporary waiver enables EV charger acquisition and installation to immediately proceed while also ensuring the application of Buy America to EV chargers by the phasing out of the waiver over time. On the effective date of this waiver, it will apply to all EV chargers manufactured by July 1, 2024, whose final assembly occurs in the United States, and whose installation has begun by October 1, 2024” ([FHWA](#)). For complete details, please see the FHWA Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers.

Q21: We have a multifamily building project that we will begin working on in Q1 of 2025, but it will not be completed until eight to ten months later. If the chargers will be installed and operational by June 20, 2025, but the multifamily building will not be completed by then, would this EV charging project be considered eligible?

A21: Yes.

Q22: While NEVI clearly requires all charging equipment to be Buy America-compliant, other parts of the project may be subject to interpretation. Each state is responsible for confirming that their FHWA funds are being used in a manner that meets FHWA rules or receives a waiver. Can Efficiency Maine clarify which parts of the EV charging installation are required to be Buy America-compliant?

A22: [Buy America](#) applies to projects that are awarded these federal CFI funds. Waivers (e.g., [Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers](#) and [Waiver of Buy America Requirements for De Minimis Costs and Small Grants](#)) may affect which specific requirements are applicable.

Q23: NEVI requires that “Chargers must be designed to securely switch charging network providers without any changes to hardware.” Is there any available charging equipment that can switch charging networks while using the same hardware? Most charging networks have proprietary hardware.

A23: This is a question for the manufacturers of the chargers. We recommend that you secure written confirmation from the manufacturer stating that the model of the charging equipment meets these requirements.

Q24: Which purchasing channel is required? Does this need to go through Federal GSA, state DGS, Sourcewell, etc.?

A24: There is no required purchasing channel.

Q25: What documentation will Efficiency Maine require to document NEVI equipment compliance (e.g., Open Charge Point Protocol, Buy America, etc.)?

A25: We recommend that you secure written confirmation from the manufacturer stating that the model of the charging equipment meets the applicable requirements. See the RFP Terms and Conditions and Rider A – Federal Requirements for CFI-Funded Level 2 EV Chargers.

Q26: Is EV charging design an eligible cost for reimbursement?

A26: Yes. See [NEVI Program Q&A 4.9](#).

Q27: Is the 20% private match eligible for in-kind?

A27: It depends. See [200 CFR 200.1](#) and [2 CFR 200.306](#).

Q28: Does Efficiency Maine have a list of contractors that interested host sites/property owners can contact?

A28: Yes. To find a [commercial EV charger installer, click here](#). Additionally, you can [click here for a list of EV charging equipment service providers](#). Efficiency Maine has compiled this list as a resource for project developers and consumers, and it does not endorse the services or products of any specific service provider that is listed.

Q29: Does Efficiency Maine have a list of interested host sites/property owners that contractors can contact?

A29: Yes. To see a [list of interested host sites/property owners or lessees, click here](#).

Q30: When calculating the requested reimbursement amount, do applicants have to net out any federal or state grants/tax credits?

A30: No. [See Matching Rules and Requirements for the Non-Federal Share of Project Sharing](#).

Q31: Is it possible to split the required four ports into two locations (e.g., two ports at site A and two ports at site B)?

A31: No.

Q32: Is it possible to apply for funds to install four ports in two separate locations?

A32: Yes.

Q33: When are applications due? How long will the funding last?

A33: Efficiency Maine will accept applications from June 20, 2024, through December 13, 2024, or until funding is exhausted, whichever comes first. Efficiency Maine will review proposals on a rolling basis and issue awards monthly, as funding allows. Projects must be completed and operational by June 20, 2025.

Q34: Please confirm that, to be eligible for this funding, the EV charging equipment must be Buy America-compliant, and the wages must be Davis Bacon-compliant.

A34: Correct.

Q35: If an applicant proposes hardware that is not in compliance with Buy America, how will Efficiency Maine handle the application? If the proposed hardware is not compliant, does this terminate any award consideration or are there other ameliorative measures that can be undertaken whether before determination, while the application is being reviewed, or, if an award has been provided and non-compliance is later assessed, will the award be retracted or modified to allow compliance?

A35: Purchase and installation of equipment that is non-compliant with the [Buy America](#) requirements will constitute an unallowable cost under federal rules. Such costs will not be payable under the terms and conditions of the award from Efficiency Maine, and in the event that any funds have already been paid to the applicant before the discovery of the non-compliance, then those funds will need to be returned by the applicant to Efficiency Maine.

If the non-compliance is discovered before the equipment is purchased and installed, the parties to the agreement (Efficiency Maine and the applicant) should promptly give notice to the other party of this discovery. It may be possible for the applicant to negotiate substituting a new make

and model of equipment that is compliant, so long as the substitute equipment is of equal or higher standards and capacity, and does not increase the grant amount nor materially impact the scoring that was given through the competitive process. Alternatively, the applicant may withdraw the original application and re-apply in a subsequent round.

Q36: Does Efficiency Maine and/or FHWA have a list of compliant EV charging equipment and hardware?

A36: No. Neither Efficiency Maine nor FHWA have a list of compliant EV charging equipment. Efficiency Maine recommends that applicants solicit and provide certification, in writing, from their preferred manufacturer that the make and model of equipment being purchased for the project complies with all minimum requirements of the RFP and the federal NEVI/CFI rules and guidance. See [23 CFR Part 680](#).

Q37: The RFP states “Chargers that will be used primarily for charging vehicles from a public or private fleet are ineligible.” Can fleet vehicles use the Level 2 chargers?

A37: Yes, fleet vehicles may use the Level 2 chargers as long as they are not the primary users.

Q38: Would a community center that is anticipated to be developed next year be considered eligible for this funding?

A38: If the chargers will be installed and operational by June 20, 2025, it will still be considered eligible for funding.

Q39: I am finding that developers and other prospective EV charging site hosts/property owners are having trouble finding Level 2 chargers that comply with all the federal charger requirements. Does Efficiency Maine and/or FHWA have a list of Level 2 chargers that comply with the requirements?

A39: See response in A36.

Q40: If a proposed location has broken/disabled chargers, could an applicant use funds from this RFP to replace them?

A40: Projects proposing to replace or upgrade existing charging equipment are ineligible. The options are to (a) put in new chargers in a new place; or (b) add new chargers next to old ones (and then later remove the old ones).

Q41: It has been challenging for companies to find Level 2 charging equipment that is Buy America-compliant. Can Efficiency Maine and/or FHWA provide a list of Buy America-compliant Level 2 charging equipment?

A41: See response in A36.

Q42: Is Buxton an eligible location?

A42: Buxton is eligible for [RFP EM-027-2024 \(Level 2 EV Chargers: Large Workplaces\)](#) and for [RFP EM-030-2024 \(Level 2 EV Chargers: Community Locations\)](#).

Q43: Are utility expenses considered eligible costs for reimbursement?

A43: Per the RFP, “Electrical service upgrades and/or circuits” are considered eligible costs.

Q44: Why is Scarborough not considered an eligible location for RFP EM-022-2024 for Level 2 EV Chargers: Multifamily Buildings? If Efficiency Maine does not get sufficient applications for the eligible locations (Auburn, Augusta, Bangor, Biddeford, Dover-Foxcroft, Lewiston, Norway, Oxford, Portland, Sanford, South Portland, and Westbrook), will the review team consider adding additional eligible locations?

A44: Per the Maine Department of Transportation’s (MaineDOT) [CFI application](#), the towns and cities with the highest number of multifamily buildings are prioritized for this RFP’s funding. If any changes are made to the RFP, the RFP will be updated, and a notice will be sent out to Efficiency Maine’s notification list. To sign up to receive notices, visit our [“Subscribe” page](#) and click on “Electric Vehicle Notices.”

Q45: We are having trouble finding electric vehicle charging equipment that meets the ISO requirements from a software and hardware perspective. Is ISO 15118-20 software compliance at the time of the RFP application submission required? Is “Plug and Charge” required on day one of the EV charging station operations?

A45: Yes. [ISO requirements](#) must be satisfied on day one.

Q46: Each Level 2 site is required to be capable of providing at least 6 kW per port simultaneously across all AC ports. How often does this have to be achieved?

A46: Per the [NEVI Standards and Requirements](#), “each charging port must have an annual uptime greater than 97 percent.”

Q47: Are Level 2 EV charging stations that require users to bring their own cables eligible?

A47: No. Per the [NEVI Standards and Requirements](#), “Each AC Level 2 charging port must have a permanently attached J1772 connector and must charge any J1772-compliant vehicle.”

Q48: Is funding still available?

A48: Yes, significant funding is still available. When funding is exhausted, Efficiency Maine will update the RFP page.

Q49: Can awardees combine these grant funds with the [IRS 30C Alternative Fuel Vehicle Refueling Property Tax Credit](#)?

A49: The intention to use the federal tax credit does not impact eligibility for these grant funds. Please consult a tax advisor.

Q50: Can applicants/awardees change the pricing structure (e.g., \$/kWh) within the five-year term?

A50: Yes. Per the RFP, "If consumers will be required to pay an entrance fee or parking fee (e.g., in a public parking lot) that is in addition to the price (\$/kWh) to charge the vehicle, this fact must be clearly indicated in the application and the amount of the additional fee must be noted."