

**From:** [Allison Evans](#)  
**To:** [Infrastructure and Environment](#)  
**Subject:** My comments for 2022.IE27.7 on January 11, 2022 Infrastructure and Environment Committee  
**Date:** January 11, 2022 8:09:43 AM

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To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the January 11, 2022 Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting on item 2022.IE27.7, On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Stations - Pilot Update

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

Infrastructure and Environment Committee  
Toronto City Council  
c/o Matthew Green  
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January 10, 2022

Re: **IE27.7 On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Stations - Pilot Update** (Ward 10, 14, 19)

Dear Committee Members,

I write this letter on behalf of the Pocket Change Project and as a neighbourhood resident without a driveway or parking pad. Without a proximate, publicly available electric vehicle charging station, my current car remains powered by fossil fuels—an issue likely facing many other community residents in The Pocket and across the city and a barrier to meeting the city's commitment to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040.

As the Infrastructure and Environment Committee plans to extend the first stage of the Electric Vehicle (EV) roll-out into a more comprehensive city-wide program, we ask the committee to consider a more flexible, pedestrian-oriented approach to residential streets that would use institutional parking spots where available to deliver residential EV charging. The Pocket neighbourhood would be pleased to work with the city to demonstrate a comprehensive approach to EV Charging.

The Update regarding the On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Project highlights the challenges

of installing EV charging in residential areas at the scale needed to support the full transition to electric vehicles. The [Transform TO Net Zero Strategy: Pathways to 2030](#) targets 30% of vehicles registered in Toronto to be electric by 2030 and calls for an ambitious approach to public and building-specific charging facilities. Achieving the city's transition and target goals requires creative approaches to street layout. Parking arrangements will be needed beyond the “business as usual” approaches that constrained the pilot. Pedestrianised streets without defined sidewalks and curbs would provide much more flexibility to accommodate the parking and grid connections needed for EV charging. Toronto should look to Europe, where EV use is widespread, and build on their experience.

The solution to EV charging should also explore the role of institutional parking located throughout the city. For example, school parking lots and many TTC lots are typically empty outside of business hours. EV charging stations located in these parking lots could be used by staff during the day and by neighbouring residents off-hours.

The Pocket offers a representative downtown Toronto case study highlighting the challenges of locating EV charging stations in city neighbourhoods built circa 1900: capacity and sidewalk-street configuration. Parking in the Pocket is a mixture of private rear-lane accessible garages and parking spaces, front-loaded driveways and parking pads, and on-street parking. However, the parking landscape is uneven and stretched thin, resulting in less-crowded parking conditions on some streets, while drivers on other streets jockey for available spots. Additionally, the Pocket's electrical/streetlight poles are not placed between the sides of the curb and sidewalk. Helpfully, parking in the Pocket does not alternate from season to season. While the potential capacity and placement issues create challenges, they also offer the opportunity for the city to find creative solutions to providing charging stations in the city's dense downtown neighbourhoods.

The Pocket is home to several environmental stewardship programs that can partner with the City in an EV Charging case study. The neighbourhood is the home of the Pocket Change Project, established in 2016 as a community-based long-term transformation initiative focused on reducing the environmental footprint of the community in order to become Canada's greenest neighbourhood. The suite of Pocket Change actions involves residential, commercial, and institutional actors living and operating in the neighbourhood, and includes an ambitious home retrofit initiative. In 2019, the Pocket Community Association came together with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to develop a Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan (SNAP) for the community, building upon the Pocket Change Project retrofit initiative.

In 2021, City Council adopted the Pocket Plus Neighbourhood Climate Action plan which supports the Pocket Change Project as a neighbourhood scale implementation of TransformTO, by involving the City's institutional assets and expertise to 'green' the neighbourhood and maximize opportunities for environmental transformation. Pocket Plus

calls on the Director, Environment and Energy and the relevant Division Head and Corporation Offices to advance the next phase of the initiative, and outlines several Quick Starts to net zero, including EV charging infrastructure opportunities on institutional property for city employees. This could be expanded to serve neighbourhood residents, offering the city a case study in using institutional property to provide public EV charging stations.

The Pocket community displays a high level of interest in EV adoption. Many Pocket residents already own EVs, despite the charging dilemma currently facing the neighbourhood. Resident-owned EVs featured prominently at the Eco Fun Fairs held prior to the pandemic, where neighbours displayed their cars for perusal—a hit with the kids—and demonstrated functionality and features of a variety of EV makes and models. The need for shared electric car charging stations has been raised at repeated Pocket Change meetings and the most recent SNAP Workshop.

As a transition measure, the public institutions located in The Pocket could provide EV charging facilities for their staff during the day and allow Pocket residents to charge their vehicles in their otherwise empty parking lots during the evenings and weekends. The TTC's Greenwood Subway Yards include two parking lots (located on Chatham and Oakvale Avenues) which are often much emptier on weekday nights and weekends. Toronto Community Housing has extra parking spaces on Phin Avenue and in front of their homes on Chatham Avenue. The TDSB has a large parking lot on Chatham Avenue to serve the Wandering Spirit School and the Indigenous Education Centre, and the French Catholic School Board has a sizeable parking lot on Boulton Avenue as part of École élémentaire Catholique du Bon-Berger. In addition, there are often available spaces in the parking lot adjacent to Toronto Fire Station 323.

Removing barriers to EV uptake is critical for the city to meet its climate goals, and environmentally engaged neighbourhoods can help develop the needed solutions while reducing transportation emissions. Reducing the walking distance to an EV charger may tip the scale for residents thinking about switching to electric vehicles and contribute to the city's 2040 net-zero target.

Sincerely,

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