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Northampton to Begin Charging to Charge

NORTHAMPTON - Starting Monday, September 30, 2024, Northampton's Public Electric Vehicle (EV) charging network will begin charging for electricity. The price has been set at \$1.92 per hour and is designed to allow the city to break even on providing this service to residents and visitors to Northampton. The city is not interested in earning revenue from EV charging stations - this fee is carefully calculated to cover the city's costs to provide electricity and maintain the charging network. By charging a reasonable fee, nearly \$62,000 in costs currently borne by all Northampton taxpayers will be avoided, allowing the city to devote those resources to other important priorities.

Northampton has offered free EV charging in its downtown locations for more than a decade and has expanded the public charging network to include locations beyond downtown. Initially, free charging was designed to encourage the adoption and development of electric vehicle technology and to alleviate range anxiety for early adopters. Back then, the most common EVs had 80 miles of battery range. Now, EVs typically have 300 miles or more of range. EV technology is well-developed and widely adopted and does not require additional subsidies from city governments. Most other municipalities have already transitioned to charging a fee for EV charging.

Even with a fee, EV charging is still a good deal for drivers and the environment. The fee that will begin on September 30th is lower than the average price for EV charging in the area (\$2.47 per hour). For most EVs using the 6.6 kW Level II public chargers, this comes out to approximately 11 ¢ per mile. By comparison, the owner of a comparable internal combustion engine-driven car, at recent gasoline prices, is paying 14 ¢ per mile. The EV driver charging exclusively at Northampton's public EV charging network would save 21% compared to the driver of a typical gasoline-powered car. And of course, the EV still has a much lower burden on the environment, emitting just 2,639 lbs of carbon dioxide per year compared to the typical gasoline-powered car at 12,594 lbs of carbon dioxide emissions.

For more information, contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or mayor@northamptonma.gov.