DEUSA Fleet Success Stories: City of Missoula, MT

Location: Missoula, MT
Fleet type: Light-duty electric vehicles

Narrative: The City of Missoula has been gradually integrating electric vehicles (EVs) into its municipal fleet as part of its broader sustainability and EV infrastructure planning efforts. According to the City of Missoula Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan (2025), (which can be seen here: https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentCenter/View/77681/Electric-Vehicle-Infrastructure-Plan), the city's total fleet consists of 463 vehicles, including **11 battery-electric vehicles (BEVs)**, **at least 1 plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV)**, and 42 conventional hybrids. These numbers don't include the city's electric transit buses or the city's airport, which will both be reported on separately.

EV adoption began with demonstration projects and small pilot acquisitions. One of the earliest, full-sized EVs is the **Ford F-150 Lightning** used by the Water Department which soon expanded to three in total for Public Works, reflecting the city's effort to explore electric trucks for operational needs. Other light-duty BEVs in the fleet are six Westward Industries GO-4s used by the parking commission. Code compliance uses two Chevrolet Equinoxes while one Kia Sportage X (PHEV) has been added for the Public Works fleet.

The city's Office of Sustainability plays a key role in supporting municipal EV use and public charging infrastructure. The office manages a program to deploy and operate EV chargers at city facilities and coordinates planning for future charging locations to support both fleet and public use. The EV Infrastructure Plan outlines strategic placement of charging stations to ensure accessibility for city employees while considering community equity and operational efficiency.

Fleet procurement is increasingly guided by sustainability goals, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs. While the city has not formalized a public Green Fleet Policy like some other municipalities, the EV Infrastructure Plan sets the

stage for continued expansion of electrified vehicles as vehicles are retired and replaced, prioritizing zero-emission and alternative fuel vehicles wherever feasible.

Outputs & Outcomes: Integrated **16 plug-in vehicles** into the city fleet, with an additional 42 conventional hybrids supporting reduced fuel use.

- Output: Deployment of demonstration BEVs in operational roles, including multiple **Ford F-150 Lightning** for Public Works.
- Output: Strategic planning for public and fleet EV charging infrastructure, including siting and future expansion considerations.
- Outcome: Improved awareness among city departments and residents of EV capabilities and infrastructure planning.
- Outcome: Establishment of a framework for transitioning to a more sustainable, low-emission municipal fleet in the coming years.
- Outcome: There has been ongoing collaboration between the city and the county (and YTCC) resulting in 2 newly installed Level 2 chargers within the city limits, but on county property

Best Practices & Lessons Learned:

- Begin with small demonstration projects to test EVs in operational roles before wider deployment.
- Integrate at least one regular EV into a larger fleet allowing many to see and experience how the vehicle fits in and accomplishes many tasks better than the other ICE vehicles.
- Integrate fleet planning with citywide sustainability and charging infrastructure strategies.
- Prioritize partnerships between the fleet, sustainability office, local stakeholders, and county to maximize efficiency and adoption of EVs and the related infrastructure.

As part of the city's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan (2025), there was one press release sent to the media, four regional media articles written and published, over 60 conversations with residents and stake holders, two open houses and 70 survey responses. One of the media articles included this video coverage of an open house session (attended by YTCC): https://shorturl.at/PvEpv

OUTREACH OVERVIEW

Big Sky Public Relations (Big Sky PR) executed a comprehensive public involvement and outreach strategy over the 3-month Missoula EV Project timeline to ensure broad community awareness, feedback, and engagement. The outreach efforts were structured around two distinct rounds of public and stakeholder engagement, each with specific objectives, activities, and deliverables.

The first round of engagement focused on raising awareness about the project, identifying key issues and opportunities, and understanding what residents and businesses value about EVs. To generate initial awareness and participation, Big Sky PR distributed a press release to local media outlets to generate initial awareness and participation, inviting the public and stakeholders to engage with the project. A stakeholder database was also created to ensure that key audiences, such as local officials, business leaders, and community advocates, were identified and included throughout the process. Big Sky PR also developed custom social media native graphics to share key project milestones and direct audiences to the webpage. These activities successfully engaged the community while establishing a platform for continuous input throughout the project.

BY THE NUMBERS

1
PRESS RELEASE SENT TO THE MEDIA

4
REAGIONAL MEDIA ARTICLES

62
EMAIL AND PHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

2
OPEN HOUSES

70
SURVEY RESPONSES

More about Missoula's initial outreach efforts: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjmCuQ7INH4