

Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Fleet Manager Roundtable Meeting Summary

Best Practices and Fleet Processes for Transitioning to Alternative Fuels & Electric Vehicles

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Disclaimer: This is a summarized version of the meeting discussion on the above-mentioned date, held via Microsoft Teams. This is not a verbatim transcript.

Please send any questions to cleancities@nctcog.org or refer to the DFW Clean Cities website, dfwcleancities.org.

Guest Speaker Summaries:

Colby Frantz, Fleet Services Manager, City of Grand Prairie

- The City of Grand Prairie utilized a loaner electric vehicle (EV) from Ford to demonstrate use of the vehicle in their fleet. The EV was loaned to the City of Grand Prairie for 90 days. The loaner EV (F-150 Lightning) helped alleviate the concerns around EVs once city staff were able to drive or ride in the vehicle and see its features. The City of Grand Prairie is currently purchasing 8 F-150 Lightning work trucks.
- The City of Grand Prairie currently uses a request form for purchasing new vehicles. They have included questions pertaining to purchasing EVs in the request form. These questions help encourage staff to consider an EV or hybrid vehicle and require justification if an EV or hybrid vehicle was not requested for purchase. Questions included in the request form are as follows:
 - Can your facility support having EV infrastructure?
 - Will an EV work as a replacement? If no, why?
- The City of Grand Prairie uses the telematics system, Samsara, which provides an EV Sustainability Report. The City of Grand Prairie uses this report, and other metrics, to view vehicle usage information (e.g., daily mileage) to help determine if a particular vehicle would be a good fit to replace with an EV.
- The City of Grand Prairie staff have received EV training from General Motors and have onsite training for staff including EV safety. The City of Grand Prairie plans to acquire Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) EV certification for fleet staff.

Keith Harris, Director of Fleet Management, Tarrant County

- Tarrant County has established several goals to explore the adoption of alternative fuels within the County's fleet. Some goals include creating an EV charging station plan across Tarrant County, identifying Tarrant County policies related to adopting alternative fuels, identifying funding opportunities, developing an electric fleet pilot program, and determining projected costs of alternative fuel vehicles and related infrastructure.
- Tarrant County purchased several EVs to be used in a pilot project to assess EV suitability. As a part of the pilot project, Tarrant County purchased two Ford Lightnings to be used for maintenance and commuting between job site inspections. These vehicles are shared among County departments, allowing each department to assess whether it fits their needs. The EVs have received positive feedback from Tarrant County staff and long-time employees are receptive to the new technology.
- Tarrant County plans to continue evaluating where the best fit for alternative fuels, EVs, and hybrid vehicles are in their fleet.

Questions & Answers:

EV Infrastructure

1. How many EV charging units do you have and where are they located? Are they Level 1, 2, or 3?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie has 16 public charging stations and 4 fleet only charging stations. All chargers are Level 2. To charge at the public charging stations, it costs \$0.25/kWh and the city employees have authorized cards which allow them to charge for free.
 - b. Tarrant County installed EV chargers at the Precinct where the Ford Lightnings are parked, but do not have public infrastructure at this time.
2. What kind of EV Fleet management software are you using to fully utilize the EV fleet routing and charging?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie has Siemens EV chargers which uses the fleet software, EVGateway. City of Grand Prairie also uses Samsara for fleet usage reporting.
3. Is anyone establishing Vehicle to Grid infrastructure when building infrastructure?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie and Tarrant County are not currently building infrastructure with Vehicle to Grid capability. City of Grand Prairie plans to look into this more in the future. Tarrant County emphasized the need to plan for charging infrastructure when a new facility is built. Plan for 25-30 years out.
4. Did your building require any electrical or safety improvements to house EVs and chargers?
 - a. Tarrant County's building required electrical upgrades for safety reasons because the building where the EV charger is installed is old. The charger is not very close to the building because of this. States that it is critical to check what services and power sources are available at the location you want to install a charger.
 - b. City of Grand Prairie stated that there have been restrictions to the number of chargers (1-2) they can install at certain locations because the buildings are old and have reached maximum capacity on the electrical panels. City of Grand Prairie's newer buildings are future proofed for increased electrical capacity, allowing for additional installation of EV charging stations when needed.
5. Are there any plans for building public use DC fast chargers for profit?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie charges \$0.25/kWh for the use of its public chargers. Funds are currently being used towards covering the utility costs and the cost of any charging equipment that needs replacing.
 - b. Tarrant County has not yet looked into DC fast chargers and does not have plans for public infrastructure yet.

EV Training and Vehicle Maintenance

1. Can other entities join in on City of Grand Prairie's in-house EV training?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie will look into this.
2. Do you feel the training currently offered is sufficient or are there still training gaps that need to be addressed?
 - a. Tarrant County feels that the current safety training provided by the vehicle manufacturers is adequate because the technology is so new.
 - b. City of Grand Prairie feels that the training provided through GM is more than adequate. Mentioned that the training currently provided does train on how to service the EVs, but maintenance has not been needed since the vehicles are so new.
3. Have there been any maintenance issues with the EVs?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie stated there have not been any major EV repairs that weren't covered under warranty.
 - b. Tarrant County has not seen any major EV maintenance repairs. However, they did experience battery failures in the older hybrid vehicles.

EV Adoption & Staff Buy-in

1. Has there been an increase in requests for EVs?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie has seen an increase in people being open to the idea of replacing an existing vehicle with an EV, but not necessarily more requests for EVs.
 - b. Tarrant County hasn't yet approached staff to see if they'd request EVs for replacement vehicles. Plan to later in the pilot.
2. What has been the response from staff after using EVs? Are there any tips to get staff buy-in?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie stated that it is important to show both the operators and the decision makers that an EV will meet their needs. Some points made include: the less maintenance equates to less downtime, the driving experience (less noise and more acceleration), and that EVs have enough power to get the job done (not just a golf cart).
 - b. Tarrant County stated that getting the vehicles out to staff made the biggest impact and showed that EVs can do what needs to be done. Range anxiety was overcome by having staff drive the EVs.

Other Topics

1. Has anyone experienced cold temperatures affecting the EV batteries/range?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie reported no issues with the EVs in cold temperatures.
2. Does anyone currently have larger EVs used for transit?
 - a. Tarrant County does not but mentioned that the Texas Department of Transportation looked into larger trucks and ultimately went with CNG but had range issues.
 - b. City of Grand Prairie has not really looked into larger EVs due to the larger chargers needed. Not looking into it at least until they have DC fast chargers installed.
3. What dealerships are participating in the Ford loaner program for entities to test EVs?
 - a. City of Grand Prairie worked with a Government Sales Manager at Ford Pro.

Source: The North Central Texas Council of Governments & Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition