

Cities must ramp up EV infrastructure as New York paves the way toward electric cars

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With New York embracing electric cars, a new study finds the Empire State second in the nation when it comes to EV readiness.

President Joe Biden's goal is that 50 percent of all new vehicle sales will be electric by 2030. The push to electrify in New York is being defined with a state goal of phasing out all fossil fuel powered cars by 2035. Officials say New York's efforts line up with automakers' projections for electric vehicle production — and follow a similar move by California. According to [research](#) prepared by bumper.com consumer advocate Kerry Sherin, New York is one of a handful of states that have at least one public EV charge port in every county.

“New York is doing a great job as far as like adding public chargers in more counties,” Sherin said. “In fact, there's only one of 11 states that has at least one public EV charger in every county, just 11 states, which was really mind boggling to me. The fact that in five years, eight years, we're supposed to have the entire US at this point of adoption. And only 11 states right now have one, at least one public EV charge port in every single county, how are we expecting lower income communities to be able to adapt and adopt this type of technology and vehicle?”

Sherin says New York ranks ninth for EV chargers per 10,000 people... “...with 9000 charger ports and 7.7 per 10,000 residents. So that's 161% more than the national average charge ports per 10,000 people,” Sherin said. “So New York is, you know, getting the thumbs up as far as you know, moving forward towards that goal of EV adoption. The long story short here is not only in New York, but in all counties across the U.S., we really have to make sure that we're pushing to kind of democratize the access to EV charge ports in every single community if we're going to hit that goal.”

Sherin says Warren, Hamilton, Essex, Albany and Schenectady, in that order, are the counties in New York with the most charge ports per 10,000 people. But the report suggests those living in minority communities, low-income neighborhoods and rehabilitated downtowns where row houses and apartments serve as primary residences may find it more difficult to maintain electric vehicles for everyday use.

“Predominantly white communities or counties have three, roughly three charge ports per 10,000 people, that's more than double the number of charge boards available to predominantly Black or African American counties,” said Sherin.

The city of Albany was awarded a grant from the New York state Department of Environmental Conservation to install 28 "level 2" electric charging ports at 14 stations. Mayor Kathy Sheehan says the project is funded through the DEC's Municipal Zero Emissions program.

"We are really working to ensure that we build out the infrastructure that we're going to need to support electric vehicles in the city of Albany," Sheehan said. "We're really thrilled that we were selected for this grant, it's going to allow us to continue to build those out. We've been partnering with Albany Parking Authority to get them in our garages. And then we are, you know, building out our on street infrastructure. So these are investments that are going to be needed. The federal government is providing significant incentives for people to switch to electric vehicles, and we need to be ready to support them."

Schenectady Mayor Gary McCarthy says the Electric City has facilities in place ready to charge EV's.

"It's part of the build-out that's going on. Some of the times it's on the streets, sometimes, it's again, uh, the individual homeowners are putting chargers in," McCarthy said. "Schenectady last year was designated as the Electric Vehicle City of the Year in the country, because of our innovation in terms of deploying that educating people and creating viable options as we transition from internal combustion engines to electric powered vehicles."

Phil Steck of the 110th state Assembly district says climate change is here and there's no time to waste to help New York achieve its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 85 percent by 2050.

"The problem with climate is it's a gradual accumulation that leads to long-term disaster. And that's why we have to address it now. By building up the infrastructure," said Steck.

Utility National Grid responded to a request for comment via email, saying it's "working with local municipalities, regulators and others to find the right solutions for a variety of customers. All customers... will be looking for ways to adapt to a more electrified future and we will be working to help them find those solutions."

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