



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
**ACROSS SIDEWALK ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING PERMIT PILOT POLICY**  
**Effective for Calendar Years 2023-2024**

I. Background & Applicability

The City is working to increase Electric Vehicle (“EV”) charging access throughout the City due to growing interest of residents in the City of Cambridge (“City”) who drive or are interested in driving EVs yet do not have access to reliable off-street charging solutions. To assist residents while the City explores longer-term EV charging solutions for single-family, multi-family, and mixed-use zones, the City has developed a trial permitting process for 2023-2024 (“Charging Pilot Program” or “CPP”) to explore allowing residents to charge in certain authorized sidewalk portions of public ways. The Charging Pilot Program requires participating residents to obtain a permit (“Permit”) for EV charging across a sidewalk area (“EV Charging Across Sidewalk”). EV Charging Across Sidewalk allows situating power cords, either on the ground or through the air, across a sidewalk area fronting a residential property, which area occupies the space between the residence’s property line parallel to the public way and the street portion of the public way (“Sidewalk Area”). As the City continues to expand EV charging solutions, the need for these Permits will be reduced and ultimately eliminated.

II. Permit

Residents of residential properties in a “Designated Zone”<sup>1</sup> who do not have available off-street parking will be deemed “Eligible Residents” and may apply for an annual Permit. A Permit may be granted to Eligible Residents for Level 1 (110-120V) charging only in a Sidewalk Area that is contiguous with the Eligible Resident’s residential property. A Permit will not be granted for Level 2 (240V) charging in any portions of public ways.

When considering a request for a Permit, the City, through the Superintendent of Streets, will review and determine whether the request is in the public interest. The factors the City will evaluate include, but are not limited to, safety considerations, the effect on surrounding properties, access considerations, parking considerations, access to utilities, and any upcoming construction or street changes. The City will not approve the use of any Sidewalk Area for EV Charging Across Sidewalk if a location is deemed unsafe for such use. The City may revoke a Permit and require the immediate removal of any charging equipment if it is deemed unsafe, an emergency situation arises, the Eligible Resident is not operating their EV Charging Across

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<sup>1</sup> As shown on the DPW generated map, attached hereto as “Attachment A.”

Sidewalk equipment in accordance with their Permit, the Charging Pilot Program terminates, or the City's and/or public need has changed.

### III. Obtaining and Maintaining a Permit

As stated above, a request for a Permit will be reviewed by the Superintendent of Streets. The Superintendent of Streets shall be responsible for the issuance and revocation of any Permit. A Permit application can be completed on-line using the City's an electronic form available at the City's permitting website under Public Works, <https://cambridgema.viewpointcloud.com>.<sup>2</sup>

(a) *Conditions for obtaining a Permit shall include:*

- (1) Only Eligible Residents may apply for a Permit;
- (2) Must have a valid City of Cambridge Residential Parking Permit;
- (3) A letter from a certified electrician, submitted with the Permit application, confirming the Eligible Resident's property is equipped with a ground-floor outdoor outlet that is protected by a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter ("GFCI");
- (4) Proof of homeowner's or renter's insurance.

(b) *Conditions for maintaining a Permit shall include:*

- (1) An Eligible Resident using on the ground situated power cords, in the Sidewalk Area, shall use ADA compliant ramps that cross perpendicular to the sidewalk;
- (2) An Eligible Resident using overhead situated power cords, in the Sidewalk Area, shall use an aerial support system with a minimum sidewalk clearance of nine (9) feet, which is fully located on private property with an arm that can be swung back and/or retracted fully onto private property;
- (3) An Eligible Resident may use EV Across Sidewalk Charging for the time necessary to re-charge an EV, but an Eligible Resident shall not employ EV Across Sidewalk Charging for more than twelve (12) hours at a time to charge an EV;
- (4) When not actively charging an EV, all EV Across Sidewalk Charging equipment - including power cords, ramps, and/or aerial support systems, shall be fully removed from the Sidewalk Area;
- (5) All local parking regulations, temporary and permanent, remain and shall be obeyed;
- (6) An Eligible Resident shall comply with all relevant sections of the National Electric Code including using Listed and Labeled power cords for heavy duty outdoor use;
- (7) Power cords shall be clearly tagged, with city-issued tags, at both ends with the Eligible Resident's address and Permit number.

Obtaining approval from the City and all relevant permitting departments of the City to situate charging cords in the Sidewalk Area does not create a contractual or property right or interest.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://cambridgema.viewpointcloud.com/categories/1101/record-types/6871>

Eligible Residents must follow all parking regulations, are not guaranteed a reserved parking space, and cannot use signage or other means to reserve the parking space on a public way in front of their property. Furthermore, any violation of state, federal, and municipal laws, rules, and regulations, or of any agreement with the City, may result in the immediate removal of any equipment and revocation of their Permit. Additionally, if the Charging Pilot Program is determined to not be successful or otherwise ends, then all issued Permits will be deemed void upon termination of the Charging Pilot Program.

It is important to note that the layout, design, and uses of City streets change from time to time. This may impact the availability of Permits. Sidewalk Areas that can accommodate Permits now may not be able to accommodate them in the future after modifications to the layout, design, and/or uses of an adjacent street.

The City will evaluate the Charging Pilot Program throughout 2023-2024, to determine its future viability. If the Charging Pilot Program continues, in any form, beyond 2024, further approvals, permits, and fees may be required.

#### IV. Enforcement

If Across Sidewalk Charging equipment is left in the public way when an EV is not actively charging and/or charging more than twelve (12) hours, then an Eligible Resident may receive a written warning. The Superintendent of Streets may immediately revoke Permits in the event the Superintendent of Streets deems it necessary for the health, safety, and proper operation and maintenance of the City's public ways and remove all Across Sidewalk Charging equipment.

Failure to comply with the conditions for maintaining a Permit may result in the Superintendent of Streets terminating that Permit and ordering the removal of Across Sidewalk Charging equipment at a Permit holder's expense.

If at any time, the Superintendent of Streets determines that the required accessibility to and in the public way is not being met then the Superintendent of Streets may order a Permit holder to immediately remove all Across Sidewalk Charging equipment.

A Permit holder will agree to assume responsibility for any and all claims, losses, or liability arising from any act, omission, or failure of themselves, their licensees, guests, agents, and/or contractors relating to EV Charging Across Sidewalk activity approved by their permit.

By:   
Katherine Watkins  
Commissioner of Public Works

Date: 