



Department: Public Works
Cost Center: 9501
For Agenda of: 12/2/2025
Placement: Consent
Estimated Time: N/A

FROM: Aaron Floyd, Public Works & Utilities Director
Prepared By: Emma Laplante, Engineer II

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO AWARD BATTERY ELECTRIC BUS CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE, SPECIFICATION NO. 2000403

RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the project plans and specifications for the Battery Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure, Specification No. 2000403; and,
2. Award a construction contract to Newton Construction and Management in the amount of \$290,135 for the Battery Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure, Specification No. 2000403; and,
3. Authorize the City Engineer to approve Contract Change Orders up to the available project budget (Account 2000403), including any amendments authorized by the City Manager; and,
4. Authorize the City Engineer to execute a contract with PG&E for replacement and upgrading of the existing transformer servicing the bus chargers; and,
5. Authorize staff to purchase ChargePoint chargers and power blocks from a SourceWell agreement [#042221-CPI](#) at the final price within the available project budget; and,
6. Authorize the Finance Director to transfer \$370,800 from the Fleet Replacement – Bus Replacement (Account No. 2000614), to the Battery Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure (Account No. 2000403).

POLICY CONTEXT

This project supports [Major City Goals of Climate Action](#), Open space, and Sustainable Transportation by implementing a shift from fossil fuel-powered buses to an all-electric fleet. The project progresses the city towards the goal of being carbon neutral by 2035 as identified in the [City of San Luis Obispo's Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP).

On May 17, 2022, Council approved a Purchasing Policy Update to the Financial Management Manual, requiring Council authorization for Public Works contracts exceeding \$200,000.

To ensure consistency across departments and simplify operations and maintenance, ChargePoint chargers will be installed for this project. ChargePoint is currently being used successfully at other city facilities. The City of [San Luis Obispo Municipal Code Section 3.24.060\(D\)](#) Bidding Procedures allows for direct purchasing “when supplies or equipment have been uniformly adopted in the city or otherwise standardized”. Additionally, Section 3.24.060 (E) permits direct purchasing “when the purchase will be made cooperatively with one, or more, other units of government, or from a local dealer within the city limits that can provide the same brand, model and configuration of item(s) identified in cooperative purchase agreement(s) at or below the cooperative purchasing net cost within the same terms and conditions”.

The City will use a Sourcewell¹ cooperative purchasing agreement to procure the ChargePoint EV chargers. This agreement leverages a competitively solicited contract that meets public procurement requirements, providing pre-negotiated pricing and terms. Using Sourcewell ensures cost-effectiveness, compliance, and efficiency in acquiring standardized charging infrastructure. Sourcewell has also been used for previous bus and other City purchases, and its cooperative pricing is lower than quotes received directly from ChargePoint, making it the preferred method for procuring the chargers.

DISCUSSION

Background

On [November 15, 2022](#), Council approved the first phase of charging infrastructure at the Transit Yard. That project installed two (2) ChargePoint Express 250 bus chargers, along with the electrical and site improvements necessary to support expansion of the electric bus fleet. On [July 11, 2023](#), Council approved the purchase of six (6) Gillig Electric Buses, which have arrived and are currently being retrofitted with the City-required technology and branding. The buses will be ready for service in early 2026, but will not begin service until the additional charging infrastructure is installed. There are currently two (2) electric buses in service that were purchased in 2022, making a total of eight (8) zero-emission buses. The purchase of these buses aligns with the State of California’s Air Resources Board requirement to have 100% zero-emission transit vehicles by 2040 and supports the City’s goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2035. However, the two existing chargers on site are insufficient to simultaneously charge all eight (8) buses and maintain full-time service. Therefore, installation of additional chargers and supporting infrastructure is needed to accommodate the expanded electric bus fleet.

¹ Sourcewell is a Government agency created by the Minnesota legislature to procure cooperative agreements.

Project Scope

The final build-out to support electric buses at the Transit Yard will include six (6) Power Blocks and twelve (12) ChargePoint Express Plus Chargers. The scope of this specific project includes the installation of four (4) ChargePoint Express Plus chargers and two (2) ChargePoint Power Blocks. The purpose of the power blocks is to convert AC power to DC power, with each Power Block servicing two (2) Express Plus Chargers. To ease future installation of the power blocks, the scope also includes construction of the concrete foundations and conduit stub-ups for the four (4) future power blocks. Furthermore, due to the increased electrical demand required to charge eight buses, the existing 400-kilovolt-amperes (kVA) PG&E transformer will be upgraded to a 750-kVA transformer.

The project will be completed under three different contracts to complete the scope outlined above. The construction contract for the installation of the chargers is recommended to be awarded to Newton Construction. The chargers will be purchased with a Sourcewell Cooperative agreement, which has been utilized for other projects by the city. Lastly, there will be a contract with PG&E for the installation of the transformer. This phase of installation utilizes a different model of charger than those installed during the first phase. The new ChargePoint Express Plus units can fully charge a bus in approximately 3.5 hours, twice as fast as the previously installed chargers. The newly purchased electric bus will use an estimated 80% of its battery on the longer routes and 60% on shorter routes. The buses will need to be charged every night in order to be used for the next day's service. This increased efficiency allows for greater flexibility in scheduling bus charging throughout the day and reduces exposure to peak electricity rates. At the time of the first phase of construction in 2022, ChargePoint Express Plus chargers were not yet available.

The advertised project scope also included an additive alternative scope to install one (1) power block and two (2) additional chargers. Due to funding constraints, the alternate scope is not recommended for award at this time.

Project Advertisement and Bid Results

An initial Bid opening was held on August 21st, 2025. The City received one bid that was deemed non-responsive and was therefore rejected. The project was subsequently readvertised, and the second bid opening was held on November 4th, 2025. Two bids were received. Upon review, the lowest bid from Lee Wilson Electrical was found non-responsive due to not meeting the required number of prior electric vehicle charging reference projects as specified in the Notice to Bidders. The second bid, submitted by Newton Construction, was determined to be responsive. Both bids exceeded the Engineer's Estimate of \$265,650, reflecting ongoing cost escalation and a limited pool of contractors qualified to complete this type of project. Staff recommends awarding the project to Newton Construction, even though it is higher than the Engineer's Estimate. It is unlikely that bids would decrease if the project were to be readvertised, and doing so would cause further delays to the implementation of the EV buses that are currently on site.

Item 5h

	Engineer's Estimate	Lee Wilson Electrical	Newton Construction & Management
Base Bid:	\$222,000.00	\$253,899.00	\$290,135.00
Additive Alternative:	\$43,550.20	\$104,150.00	\$112,050.20
Total:	\$265,550.00	\$358,049.00	\$402,185.00

The total cost of the listed bid results above does not include the purchase of the chargers and power blocks. The City will be purchasing those separately with an estimated cost of \$510,000. There will also be an additional anticipated cost of \$170,000 for the purchase of the transformer from PG&E for a total project cost of \$1,103,225.

Previous Council or Advisory Body Action

This project was identified in the [2023-2025 Financial Plan](#) that was approved by Council.

On [January 14, 2025](#) Council approved the execution of an agreement with SLOCOG for the city to receive \$395,000 in grant funding from Senate Bill (SB) 125 and appropriate those funds to Project No. 2000403 for installation of the EV infrastructure needed at the Transit Yard.

On [June 17, 2025](#) Council approved the transfer to Project No. 2000403 of \$14,868 in Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds and \$69,156 in reassigned LCTOP competitive funds from project account 200058, which was the remaining balance from the original project in 2022.

Public Engagement

Public engagement occurred when the Project was first identified and included in the [City's 2023–25 Financial Plan](#).

CONCURRENCE

The Public Works Department, Fire Department, and City Administration have reviewed and concurred with the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is exempt from environmental review under Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities) of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines because this project proposes work within the existing transit facility. The project is consistent with the applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable City Regulations. A Notice of Exemption has been filed with the Community Development Department.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

Budgeted: Yes

Funding Identified: Yes

Budget Year: 2025-2027

Fiscal Analysis:

The total project cost of \$1,103,225 includes the construction costs, construction contingencies, design support during construction, materials testing, purchase/installation of PG&E transformer and purchase of the EV chargers and power blocks. As a side note, the purchase price of chargers and power blocks was quoted at \$510,000 and is not expected to fluctuate significantly.

The project is funded through a combination of federal and state grants, along with remaining funding from the previous transit project and bus purchases. Federal Grant FTA 5307 can only be used for the purchase of the Charging Equipment; it can not be used for construction or site improvements. The other funding sources do not have any use restrictions and can be used to install and complete the site work.

Funding Sources	Total Budget Available	Current Transfer Request	Account Balance (Account 2000403)	Remaining Account Balance (Account 2000614)	Annual Ongoing Cost
State: Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP)	\$268,299.00	\$0	\$268,299.00	\$0	\$0.00
Federal: SB 125	\$395,000.00	\$0	\$395,000.00	\$0	\$0.00
State: Transit Fund (LCTOP)	\$69,156.00	\$0	\$69,156.00	\$0	\$0.00
FTA 5307 (2000614)	\$534,834.70	\$315,180.00	\$315,180.00	\$219,654.70	\$0.00
TDA (2000614)	\$94,382.30	\$55,620.00	\$55,620.00	\$38,762.30	\$0.00
Total	\$1,361,672.00	\$370,800	\$1,103,255.00	\$258,417	\$0.00

Staff recommend transferring \$315,180 FTA 5307 grant funds and \$55,620 TDA grants funds, \$370,800 total, from project account 2000614 to project account 2000403. The funds in account 2000614 are remaining grant funds from the purchase of the two electric buses, allocated for the construction cost of the EV charging infrastructure. There will be a remaining balance of \$258,417.00 in project account 2000614.

Battery Electric Bus Infrastructure No. 2000403						
Project Costs	Battery Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure (2000403)					Project Total Costs
	LCTOP	SB 125	CIP – Transit Fund (LCTOP)	FTA 5307	TDA	
Construction Bid - Base:	\$44,135.20	\$246,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$290,135.20
Total Construction Cost:	\$44,135.20	\$246,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$290,135
Charger + Power Block Purchase (Base Bid):	\$0	\$139,200	\$0	\$315,180	\$55,620	\$510,000
Material Testing	\$10,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$15,000
Printing	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500
PG&E Transformer:	\$170,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$170,000
Construction Contingencies (12%):	\$43,663.60	\$9,800	\$64,156	\$0	\$0	\$117,620.60
Total Project Cost	\$268,299	\$395,000	\$69,156	\$315,180	\$55,620	\$1,103,225
Current Project Balance	\$268,299	\$395,000	\$69,156	\$315,180	\$55,620	\$1,103,255
Total Project (Base) Project Remaining Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

The cost associated with the transformer is an estimate based on staff research of similar projects. PG&E has not been able to provide a quote for this work. However, PG&E did verify that there will be minimal site work associated with the upgrade (i.e. new concrete pad), which staff anticipates will reduce the overall cost.

ALTERNATIVES

Deny authorization to award the project. City Council may choose not to authorize the award of the project. Choosing not to proceed at this time would result in significant delays to the deployment of the newly acquired electric buses, potentially impacting service schedules and operational planning.

Deny authorization to award the project and rebid the project for a third time. City Council may choose not to authorize the award of the project and request to readvertise the project. This change would most likely result in higher overall construction costs and additional delays to both the charger installation and the rollout of the electric bus fleet.

Authorize the award of the project and request that the procurement of the chargers and power blocks be publicly bid. City Council may choose to authorize the award of the construction contract with Newton, but request staff to competitively bid the procurement of the chargers and power blocks instead of procuring them using the Sourcewell agreement. This would result in several months of delays to project completion, and could also result in higher costs for the chargers.

ATTACHMENTS

- A - [Battery Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure – Plans](#)
- B - [Battery Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure – Specials](#)
- C- Contractor Agreement