Submission No 38

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ELECTRIC AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCE VEHICLES IN NSW

Organisation: Local Government NSW (LGNSW)

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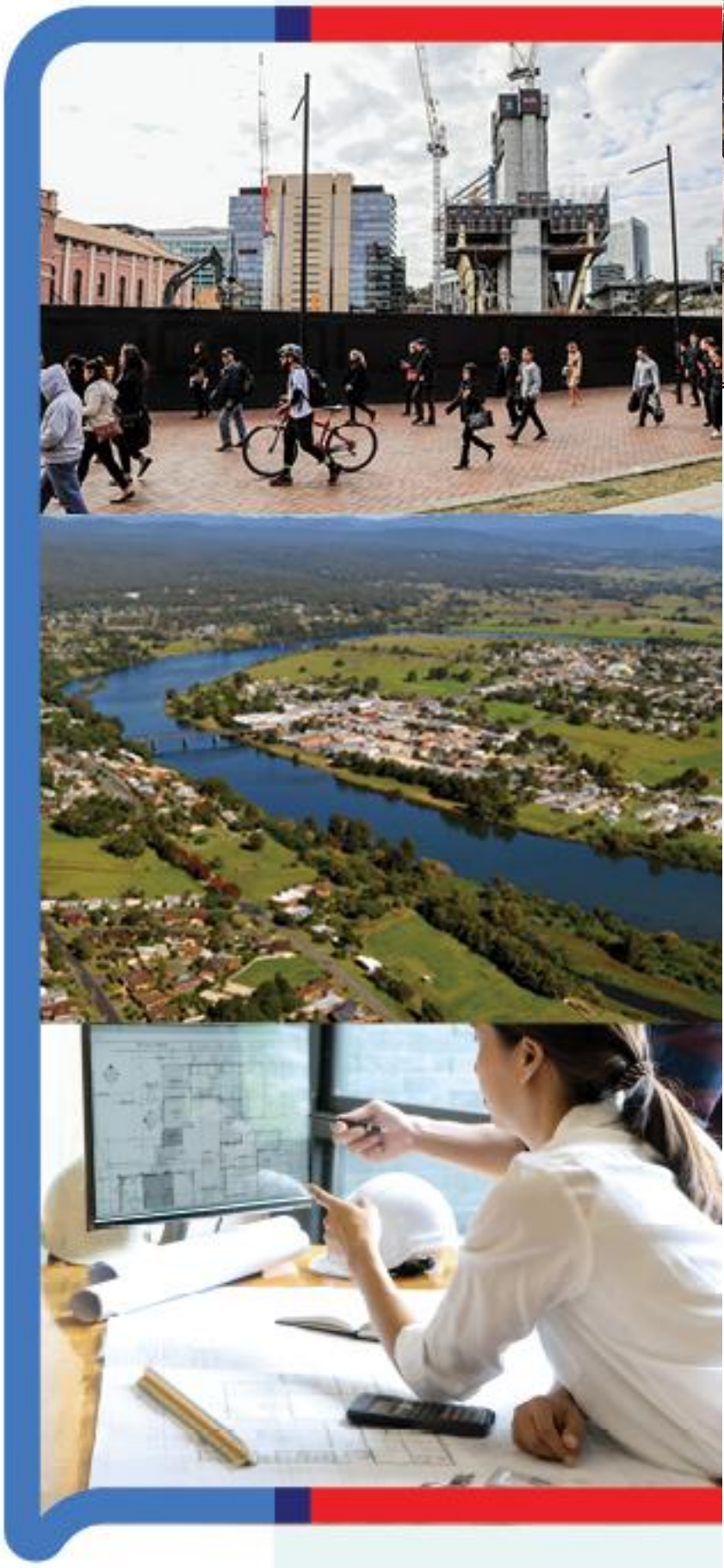
LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW



LGNSW DRAFT SUBMISSION

Infrastructure for electric and alternative energy source vehicles in NSW

May 2024

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Local Government NSW (LGNSW) is the peak body for local government in NSW, representing NSW general purpose councils and related entities. LGNSW facilitates the development of an effective community-based system of local government in the State.

OVERVIEW OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR

- Employ nearly **50,000 people**
- Maintain more than **168,000km of roads & bridges**
- Recycle **1.75 million tonnes of waste**
- Operate more than **380 libraries that attract tens of millions of visits each year**
- Manage an estimated **4 million tonnes of waste each year**
- Manage more than **1,800 community & public centres**
- Manage more than **$220 billion of community assets**
- Spend more than **$2.5 billion each year on caring for the environment**
- Make kerbside waste collections for more than **3.1 million households**
- Spend more than **$2.4 billion on culture and recreation**

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Opening

LGNSW welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the NSW Committee on Transport and Infrastructure's inquiry into infrastructure for electric and alternative energy source vehicles in NSW.

This submission is informed by the policy positions of LGNSW and consultation with NSW councils. LGNSW hosted a feedback forum with council staff and councillors in April 2025 and we are also aware of other local government organisations making their own submissions.

This submission is in draft form until endorsed by the LGNSW Board. The Committee is asked to consider this current version. If there are any changes following Board endorsement, these will be separately provided to the Committee.

Background

The NSW Government has legislative targets to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions (GHG emissions) by 2050 and to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030 and by 70% by 2035 (compared to a 2005 baseline). The NSW Government introduced the *NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy*[1] and the *NSW Hydrogen Strategy*[2] in 2021, which are key components of their plan to decarbonise the transport sector.

The *NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy* is focused on increasing the uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) and improving the charging network. Key commitments include funding EV fast charging grants for major state highways, EV kerbside chargers in areas with the least access to private off-street parking, EV fleet incentives for organisations, EV tourist destination charging grants and EV building grants for apartments.[3]

The *NSW Hydrogen Strategy* sets out the NSW Government's vision and path to develop a green hydrogen industry in NSW, including using hydrogen to decarbonise heavy transport. It includes a stretch target for 20% of heavy vehicles to be hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles by 2030.[4]

These strategies are supported by the *NSW Electricity Strategy*[5] and the *NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap*[6] which set out the NSW Government's plan to transform the electricity system and secure a clean, affordable and reliable electricity supply.

[1] Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (2021) *NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy*, NSW Government
[2] Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (2021) *NSW Hydrogen Strategy*, NSW Government
[3] Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (2021) *NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy*, NSW Government
[4] Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (2021) *NSW Hydrogen Strategy*, NSW Government
[5] Department of Planning, Industry and Environment *NSW Electricity Strategy Detailed*, NSW Government
[6] NSW Climate and Energy Action (2020) *NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap*, NSW Government website, accessed 13 Feb 2025

LGNSW Position

The LGNSW Policy Platform consolidates the voices of councils across NSW, reflecting the collective positions of local government on issues of importance and guiding LGNSW in its advocacy on behalf of the local government sector.

LGNSW supports the urgent need to decarbonise transport to meet GHG emissions reduction targets and safeguard future generations from the worst effects of climate change.

It includes specific positions relating to electric and alternative energy source vehicles, namely:

> 10.11 Enable the uptake of zero and low emission technologies including electric vehicles through appropriate investment, concessions, guidelines and legislation.
>
> 15.3 The NSW Government to take action to protect human health and the environment by:...
>
> > b) Working with the federal government to ensure that all vehicles imported into Australia meet the highest EU standards for emissions and introduce tax initiatives to encourage the up-take of electric powered vehicles.

Our policy position is informed by annual conference resolutions debated and agreed by mayors and councillors. The conference resolutions relevant to this submission, including several from the November 2024 LGNSW annual conference, are listed in Appendix A.

Response

LGNSW supports the urgent need to decarbonise the transport sector by moving away from traditional internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles that are powered by fossil fuels and towards electric and other energy fuel-source vehicles. There is also a need for a greater uptake of public and active transport, as well as car sharing to reduce the number of private vehicles on roads.

Councils recognise the benefits the EV transition brings, including a reduction in GHG emissions, less air and noise pollution and lower ongoing costs for users. Councils therefore welcome the rollout of electric charging infrastructure to facilitate this transition, and to enable their communities to take up and benefit from EVs. Rural and regional councils also welcome the increased tourism that EV chargers can bring to their LGAs.

Fuel supply planning and operation goes beyond councils' traditional responsibilities, but some councils are choosing to deploy EV chargers on public land, while others are playing a facilitatory role in the deployment of chargers or private land. The deployment and operation of private EV charging infrastructure has implications for council planning, resourcing and infrastructure, such as car parks and footpaths. There are also council liability implications when private EV charging-related incidents occur on public land.

In addition, other council-owned or managed infrastructure, such as local roads, bridges and bike paths, is affected more broadly by the transition to electric vehicles and alternate energy fuel source vehicles.

LGNSW requests that the NSW Committee on Transport and Infrastructure consider our recommendations in their advice, recommendations and final report to the NSW Government. A summary of our recommendations is listed in *Appendix B.*

a) funding and location of electric vehicle chargers or infrastructure for other potential energy fuel sources

The role of councils in charging infrastructure

Councils often play a role in supporting the deployment and operation of EV charging infrastructure within their local government area (LGA). Some councils are actively involved with deployment, while others choose to take a facilitatory approach, such as supporting community consultation around charging infrastructure and location approvals. However, it should be recognised that councils are not historically fuel providers, and this goes beyond their traditional responsibilities. Some councils have also raised concerns around the impact on the development of the charging operator market, if councils deploy chargers themselves, as it could act as a disincentive for private investment.

Many councils have taken advantage of EV grant programs to install chargers on council-managed land, such as car parks around shops, parks and libraries. These grants often require councils to own and manage the charging infrastructure, presenting additional responsibilities and challenges. Council staff must navigate technical and contractual complexities, including equipment maintenance, managing electricity loads and costs, and ensuring public safety. The NSW Government should provide additional support to councils, including funding to cover the increased responsibilities.

There are also risks for councils where non-council-managed charging infrastructure encroaches on council-managed areas. Councils are liable for any incidents that occur on council roads and footpaths and are therefore concerned about trip hazards from charging cables, obscured sight lines for traffic, and fire risks associated with electrical infrastructure. The NSW Government should introduce regular maintenance requirements for EV chargers to be carried out by providers and should mandate that

providers are responsible for the full lifecycle of the asset, including safe disposal and recycling where possible. Legislation should also be amended so that liability for any incidents relating to non-council managed infrastructure falls with the provider, even if it occurs on council-managed land.

Some councils wish to install chargers on council-managed Crown land but have expressed a lack of clarity and guidance on the correct processes for this. Councils call on the NSW Government to produce guidance regarding the use of council-managed operational and community-designated Crown land, including clarification on how councils can provide easements to Distributed Network Service Providers (DNSPs) to install or upgrade infrastructure.

Recommendations:

1. That the NSW Government provide additional support to councils to navigate their increased responsibilities relating to charging infrastructure, over and above their core work.
2. The NSW Government introduce regular maintenance requirements for EV chargers to be carried out by providers.
3. The NSW Government mandate that EV providers are responsible for the full lifecycle of the asset, including safe disposal and recycling where possible.
4. That the NSW Government amend legislation so that liability for any incidents relating to non-council managed infrastructure falls with the provider, even if it occurs on council-managed land.
5. That the NSW Government provide clear and consistent guidance to councils on the legal process for installing chargers on council-managed operational and community-designated Crown land.

Flexibility in funding models and grants

Councils called for more flexibility and adaptability in grant funding for EV charging, including ensuring funding is not tied to a specific site and that there are flexibilities in delivery timelines.

The delivery timeframes should account for council planning and consultation, as well as potential delays due to community opposition or other challenges. For example, a council highlighted that the NSW Government's 12 month timeframe for the EV Kerbside Charging Grant did not account for their council's mandatory three month community consultation process, which includes preparation, community consultation, engagement with the Local Traffic Committee, and approvals at council meetings. Local elections had resulted in a reduced number of council meetings within the 12 month period, further squeezing the ability for council to deliver within the set timeframe.

It was also highlighted that once a site has been approved for funding, if issues are discovered post-assessment, such as insufficient power supply or conflicts with underground infrastructure, providers must complete a revised application and obtain a new council letter of support. If a community rejects a site during consultation, an additional round of community consultation must be completed with the new site, on top of the revised application. This consumes significant time and resources that is not accounted for by the grant timeframes or funding, as administrative costs are not covered.

In addition, some grants, including the NSW EV kerbside charging grants and EV destination charging grants, also exclude funding for site feasibility studies and the required electricity upgrades. This poses a significant cost barrier to councils or providers choosing to install an EV charger or to proceeding with an alternate location if the first is rejected during community consultation. Grant funding criteria should therefore be expanded to include electricity infrastructure upgrades and feasibility assessments. In areas with significant gaps in charging provision and where there may be a lack of commercial interest, such as in some regional, rural and remote areas, the administrative costs should also be covered.

The NSW Government-funded initiative with Chargeworks is welcomed as it offers an improved approach, with greater flexibility and no additional funding required. Chargeworks supports councils to identify mutually favourable locations for direct current (DC) chargers and councils only need to provide one letter of support confirming that they can supply suitable council-owned or managed locations. It has enabled councils and local businesses to install and benefit from fast-charging DC chargers, that they are unlikely to have been otherwise able to afford. Other grant programs should follow this approach, whereby councils are supported to identify suitable locations and only one letter of support is required covering multiple potential sites.

Recommendations:

6. That the NSW Government broaden grant funding criteria to include:
    a. electricity infrastructure upgrades and feasibility assessments.
    b. administrative costs, for areas with significant gaps in charging provision and where there may be a lack of commercial interest, such as in some regional and remote areas.
7. That the NSW Government introduce greater flexibility in grant funding for EV chargers and untie funding from a specific site, for example by requiring only one council letter of support covering multiple potential sites.

Use of public land and leasing arrangements

Some councils highlighted concerns around the expectation that councils will provide parking spaces for pole-mounted chargers delivered by Charge Point Operators (CPO), as well as manage the associated responsibilities, costs and issue that arise. The responsibilities include line marking, signage, maintenance, community engagement

(including dealing with questions and complaints) and regulatory work. This can be a significant amount of work which is costly for councils (with costs ultimately borne by ratepayers), but there is no revenue sharing or licence with councils, as the arrangement tends to be between the CPO and the DNSP. The NSW Government should introduce guidance for funding arrangements for CPOs to cover the costs for the additional council workload, and prevent cost shifting onto councils and their communities.

While councils choose to host EV infrastructure on public land, it presents administrative challenges and legal risks, for example liability in the case of an accident or fire. Councils can also face community resistance and backlash due to existing car parking spaces being designated as EV-only sites. To reduce this opposition, there is a need for more public education on the societal benefits of EVs, such as improved air quality, and the need to share car spaces with EVs.

Councils generally negotiate lease agreements with providers on a case-by-case basis, which is resource intensive. The NSW Government should introduce a lease template that provides greater consistency and streamlines the process. Some councils have developed their own supporting documentation, for example Singleton Council developed an *Electric Vehicle Charging Stations on Public Land Policy*[7] which assists both public and private operators to meet council's requirements, including leasing arrangements.

A barrier to installing third party EV charging on community land, such as parks, is the requirement to amend Plans of Management (PoMs) to permit third party charging. It is a lengthy process whereby councils must individually update the PoM for each site and, if the site is Crown land, obtain approval for each by the NSW Government. Councils would therefore welcome policy changes to reduce the administrative burden for themselves and for the NSW Government. For example, a streamlined process could be introduced where all PoMs within an LGA can be updated and approved collectively to support third party EV charging. Alternatively, the requirement for councils to obtain NSW Government approval to update a PoM for Crown land reserves could be removed where the changes related to the inclusion of third party EV charging.

LGNSW would also welcome the NSW Government considering whether environmental assessment requirements for charging infrastructure under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) duplicates requirements under the *Roads Act 1993*. In early 2023, the NSW Government amended legislation so that kerbside EV chargers were required to undergo a Part 5 approval process under the EP&A Act. Feedback from councils suggests that this may be a redundant process, as councils can already install a range of infrastructure under Section 138 of the Roads Act, which covers works in a public roadway including on-street EV chargers. The duplicate processes encompass environmental impact assessments, traffic studies and community consultations. The NSW Government should consider whether these processes can be streamlined while maintaining the important role of local government in considering impacts.

[7] Singleton Council (2023) *Electric Vehicle Charging Stations on Public Land Policy*

Recommendations:

8. That the NSW Government introduce guidance for funding arrangements for Charge Point Operators to cover the costs of the additional council workload.
9. That the NSW Government fund a public education program on the societal benefits of EVs, such as improved air quality, and the need to share car spaces with EVs.
10. That the NSW Government develop a standardised lease template for EV infrastructure installed on public land.
11. That the NSW Government introduce a streamlined process for updating Plans of Management for community land to allow for third party EV charging, for example, by permitting batch updates or by removing the need for NSW Government approval.
12. That the NSW Government consult with councils to consider whether environmental assessment requirements under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* duplicate requirements under the *Roads Act 1993*, and whether these could be streamlined.

Identifying suitable charging locations

Councils have highlighted in their feedback to LGNSW that there is a need for more strategic planning of charging infrastructure to meet demand and ensure an equitable distribution. The risk of an under- or oversupply of chargers was raised, for example either side of an LGA boundary where councils are unaware of planned activity in a neighbouring LGA.

The NSW Government should fund the development of regional EV charging strategies, which could be created by or in partnership with Joint Organisations (JOs) and Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs). This work should be underpinned by localised needs analysis, based on EV use and electricity demand (from both residents and tourists), existing and planned charging infrastructure, land uses and grid capacity constraints.

Existing resources could be utilised to inform the strategies, including the *NSW Electric Vehicle Fast Charging Infrastructure Master Plan*[8], a mapping tool to guide the development of future electric vehicle fast charging infrastructure, and Transport for NSW's *Registration snapshot report*[9], which tracks the percentage of EVs and rate of EV uptake overtime within LGAs.

ROCs and JOs could then work with councils to identify suitable sites and appropriate types of chargers to meet community needs, for example (AC or DC chargers). Council local knowledge is important, for example in understanding the demand for parking spaces and possible community backlash due to the displacement of traditional parking

[8] Department of Planning, Industry and Environment *NSW Electric Vehicle Fast Charging Infrastructure Master Plan*, NSW Government website, accessed 30 April 2025
[9] Transport for NSW *Registration snapshot report*, NSW Government website, accessed 30 April 2025

bays. DNSPs should also be engaged to provide information on existing and planned electrical infrastructure and electrical capacity.

Ideally, a statewide GIS map should be created that is more granular that the *NSW Electric Vehicle Fast Charging Infrastructure Master Plan* and highlights existing chargers, infrastructure gaps, capacity constraints, and suitable EV charging locations. This tool would guide both public and private sector investment and decisions, including recommending the appropriate type of charger for a site.

The tool should be supported by standardised site selection criteria that would be considered in planning decisions to ensure the charger type, speed, and placement are appropriate for the location and intended user. For example, slower AC chargers may be more appropriate in shopping precincts where users are expected to stay longer, whereas fast DC chargers are better suited for highways and commuter routes. Some councils have adopted the "right charger, right place" principle, but standardised state guidance would improve consistency.

The standardised selection criteria should set out the wide range of factors that influence the suitability of sites and provide guidance on how these should be considered, including:

- Forecast charging demand, accounting for both residents and potential tourists.
- Existing and planned charging infrastructure supply, including types of available chargers.
- Proximity to existing grid infrastructure with sufficient capacity.
- Land ownership and restrictions.
- Adequate physical space for chargers, transformers, and vehicles without encroaching on other land uses or creating public safety risks.
- The presence of nearby amenities and attractions, such as parks, museums and shopping centres to determine expected user parking time.
- The impact on parking availability for accessing local businesses and amenities, and possible community backlash.
- Economic development potential through increased visitation and EV tourism.
- Environmental impacts, for example on mature vegetation that provides urban cooling or ecological value.

Some councils expressed a preference for off-street parking locations to reduce conflict with other community uses, such as pedestrian footpaths, bike lanes and existing parking spaces, and to avoid council liability for accidents and fires associated with infrastructure traversing council managed land.

Infrastructure for micro-mobility should also be considered and planned for alongside EV chargers for passenger vehicles. This should include accounting for future bike lanes and increased electricity demand to charge e-bikes, e-scooters and other new types of e-vehicles that may come to market.

Recommendations:

13. That the NSW Government fund and support the development of regional EV charging strategies in partnership with Joint Organisations (JOs) and Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs).
14. That the NSW Government provide funding for councils and JOs/ROCs to identify suitable sites and appropriate types of chargers to meet community needs, including engaging with DNSPs on infrastructure capacity.
15. That the NSW Government create a GIS map that highlights existing chargers, infrastructure gaps, capacity constraints, and suitable EV charging locations.
16. That the NSW Government establish state-level standardised site selection criteria to guide charger type, placement and accessibility.

Design and management of charging bays

Consistent design and management of EV charging bays is needed to avoid confusion and misuse of bays and ensure equitable access. For example, councils cited issues of ICE vehicles parking in EV-only spaces and of EV users parking in charging bays for long periods of time, far exceeding the charging time. This misuse of charging spaces results in less availability for other users, affecting access to services and amenities.

The NSW Government should advocate for the Commonwealth Government to develop a national sign for EV charging spaces, similar to that for accessible parking, to ensure consistency between states and LGAs. LGNSW Annual Conference resolutions also highlight the need for more government guidance on EV parking and charging *(see Appendix A, R3)*. Guidance should cover appropriate parking time limits depending on the type of charger and location, idle fees for parking beyond the time limits during peak hours, and fines for ICE vehicles parking in EV-only spaces.

Recommendations:

17. That the NSW Government advocate to the Commonwealth Government to develop a national sign for electric vehicle charging spaces.
18. That the NSW Government introduce guidance on appropriate parking time limits and idle fees depending on the type of charger and location, and fines for ICE vehicles parking in EV-only spaces.

EV readiness in new and existing developments

LGNSW Annual Conference resolutions support the position that the NSW Government should mandate that all public car parking facilities, whether publicly or privately owned, be progressively made electric vehicle charger ready with the necessary electrical infrastructure and supply capacity *(see Appendix A, R1)*. Existing and planned multi-level car parks should also be assessed to ensure they can safely accommodate a

full complement of heavier EV vehicles and that appropriate fire mitigation measures are in place, such as automatic fire sprinklers.

Installing EV chargers in existing apartments, duplexes and strata-managed properties is often very challenging, with technical, financial and practical obstacles. For example, these include space and electrical design limitations, fire safety regulations and the need for coordination and alignment of views between multiple residents and the strata committee. Councils would like to see additional support from the NSW Government to overcome these barriers, for example by leading coordination between DNSPs and strata committees. Given these challenges, it is especially important that new apartments are built with EV chargers, and several councils have mandated this through their development control plans (DCPs).

Ideally all new buildings and developments should include EV charging, as retrofitting is more complicated and expensive. Some councils DCPs have already mandated EV charging capability for all new developments. However, there were calls for new legislation at the state or national level to mandate charging infrastructure in new residential and commercial developments, which is supported by LGNSW's annual conference resolutions *(see Appendix A, R2)*. The charging infrastructure should be supplied by renewable power and storage, ideally generated at the site, for example through rooftop solar and a battery.

Recommendations:

19. That the NSW Government mandate all public car parking facilities be progressively made electric vehicle charger ready, with electrical infrastructure, supply capacity and safety planning.
20. That the NSW Government provide support to apartments, duplexes and strata-managed properties to overcome barriers to installing electric vehicle chargers, for example by leading coordination between DNSPs and strata committees.
21. That the NSW Government or Commonwealth Government introduce legislation to mandate charging infrastructure in new residential and commercial developments.

b) the viability of alternative energy sources for freight, heavy vehicles and other licenced vehicles in regional communities

Electrification of heavy fleet

Some councils are in the process of developing fleet transition policies and are considering the electrification of their heavy fleet. However, there is currently a lack of fast-charging stations along freight routes and in regional centres, which could harm the productivity of the freight network and result in operational delays. It could also lead to increased congestion, affecting emergency services and creating frustration

amongst the community. The NSW Government should work with councils to identify the need for fast-charging stations for freight and heavy vehicles across NSW and support the rollout of these. This is especially important for regional areas, particularly along major transport corridors and near logistics hubs.

Recommendations:

22. That the NSW Government work with councils to identify the need for, and support the rollout of, fast-charging stations for freight and heavy vehicles across regional NSW.

Hydrogen for freight and heavy vehicles

Councils recognise the potential role of hydrogen as a key fuel source for freight and heavy vehicles but there were some mixed views about its long-term viability. While several councils see it as a promising solution for both long-haul road and rail freight, some questioned its ability to compete with the rapid technological improvements in battery EVs.

There were also concerns raised about the new infrastructure required to support hydrogen-powered vehicles, and the uncertainty surrounding this. There is currently insufficient incentive to invest in hydrogen infrastructure without a clear uptake of hydrogen vehicles, and conversely, a lack of incentive to transition to hydrogen vehicles until reliable refuelling infrastructure is available. There is therefore a need for additional government intervention to overcome these barriers and develop a functioning market. The NSW Government should advocate that this be led by the Commonwealth Government, in partnership with state and territory governments.

Councils also highlighted an absence of guidance or directional support from state and federal governments regarding hydrogen development in regional areas. Additional information on funding programs would be valued, as well as clear pathways for councils to assist local businesses in accessing hydrogen funding opportunities. If and when hydrogen vehicles become more commercially viable and prevalent, councils should be consulted on the roll out of the supporting infrastructure, as it will have implications for their strategic planning. Some councils may need additional support in updating their local strategic plans to account for the new infrastructure.

Recommendations:

23. That the NSW Government advocate to the Commonwealth Government for:
    a. additional action to overcome barriers to investment in hydrogen infrastructure and vehicles.
    b. guidance for councils on hydrogen funding programs available and clear pathways for councils to assist local businesses in accessing hydrogen funding opportunities.
24. That the NSW Government consult councils on the rollout of hydrogen infrastructure and provide assistance to councils on updating their strategic plans.

c) use of existing infrastructure and measures to ensure a competitive market, including 'ring fencing' policies

Ensuring a competitive market

Councils highlighted that a competitive but regulated market is essential to ensure a diversity of providers and charger types. This is viewed as important for long-term network resilience and community trust.

Ring fencing is used to promote competition and prevent DNSPs from using their positions as electricity infrastructure operators to dominate the EV charging market. It ensures a clear separation between regulated activities delivered by DNSPs, and competitive services like the provision of EV chargers, which are typically delivered by independent CPO. However, it was raised that ring fencing has the potential to create user confusion around infrastructure ownership or accountability structures.

Councils also suggested the establishment of a state-wide panel of pre-approved providers, to streamline procurement and improve delivery standards.

Recommendation:

25. That consideration be given to developing a state-wide panel of pre-approved providers, to streamline procurement and improve delivery standards.

Government intervention to address market failures

Despite the need for a competitive market, some government intervention is required to ensure public charging is delivered in areas with a particularly high electricity demand or low supply of chargers through the market. An example of this is in high-density residential areas with older building stock, where residents do not have access to private charging in their apartment buildings due to retrofit challenges. Another example is in rural and remote areas where there may be a lack of commercial interest in installing chargers and councils do not have the financing or resourcing to deploy chargers themselves.

The NSW Government should upgrade the power grid as a matter of priority to meet the higher demand for electricity resulting from an increase in EVs, e-bikes, e-scooters and other new types of e-vehicles that may come to market. It is important that areas with current capacity constraints or forecast higher demand are prioritised.

Recommendation:

26. That the NSW Government upgrade the power grid as a matter of priority to meet the higher demand for electricity.

Unified charging platform and fees

Currently, each CPO operates its own application for locating, booking and paying for EV charging. This lack of integration can be confusing and inconvenient for users, and it reduces transparency in pricing.

Councils recommend the development of a unified charging app that integrates all providers, allowing users to see all available spaces and relevant information in one place, including fees. This would promote improved transparency and competition, as well as increased convenience for users.

Councils also recommended that time-of-use pricing should be adopted for all chargers, whereby prices are cheaper during daylight hours to align with solar generation and higher during peak periods. This would help to utilise excess renewable energy production and minimise the use of fossil fuel sources, reducing GHG emissions and mitigating grid stress.

Recommendations:

27. That the NSW Government develop a single digital charging application that aggregates information from all Charge Point Operators, allowing users to locate, book and pay for EV charging through one system.
28. That the NSW Government mandate time-of-use pricing for EV chargers, including discounts during daylight hours and higher prices during peak periods.

d) measures to ensure the transition of workers from affected industries and industry standards

LGNSW Annual Conference resolutions support the position that the NSW Government should upskill workers to maintain NSW's electric vehicle fleet *(see Appendix A, R3)* and ensure affected workers are transitioned into new roles. There is an absence of EV mechanics in many rural and regional areas. One council reported having to transport its EV fleet to metro areas for servicing, which is expensive and logistically challenging.

There is also a lack of training and re-training opportunities in rural and regional areas for servicing EVs and other alternative energy source vehicles, which must be addressed in order to build a skilled workforce and to ensure affected workers remain employable. The NSW Government should work with technical and further education (TAFE) providers to ensure accredited courses are on offer across all of NSW, including in rural, regional and remote communities.

EVs typically require less frequent maintenance than ICE vehicles, and while this provides cost savings for councils and other users, it could lead to a lower demand for mechanics as the proportion of EVs increases. ICE mechanics should therefore be supported to transition into other types of roles, including through government-funded careers advice and retraining opportunities. For example, new skills could include maintaining other vehicles that are becoming increasingly popular, such as e-bikes and e-scooters, or roles within renewable energy generation and transmission. Some councils conduct the maintenance of their own fleets and must account for this in their own workforce planning and training.

Recommendations:

29. That the NSW Government work with technical and further education providers to ensure accredited courses on EV and other alternative energy source vehicles are available across all of NSW, including in rural and regional areas.
30. That the NSW Government fund free careers advice and retraining opportunities for ICE mechanics.

e) any other related matters

Impact on local infrastructure

With the adoption of EVs, it is important to assess the impact on local infrastructure, including the local road network and local bridges. EVs are heavier than ICE equivalent vehicles due to the additional weight of their batteries, which could lead to faster road and bridge deterioration. This would lead to increased road and bridge maintenance and repair cost for councils and puts pressures on these already ageing assets.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)'s 2024 National State of the Assets report revealed that that $23.1 billion of council roads across Australia are in poor condition with replacement costs as much as $19.2 billion. In NSW, councils are reporting a deterioration in their financial position, with an infrastructure backlog estimated at $6.5 billion in 2022-23.[10] Many councils cannot afford higher infrastructure maintenance costs and will need support from the NSW Government to fund these.

Recommendation:

31. That the NSW Government provide funding to assist councils with the additional maintenance costs for local infrastructure, due to the additional weight of EVs.

[10] NSW Office of Local Government, *Your Council website*, accessed 1 May 2025

Supporting the electrification of fleets

While some councils have already electrified their fleets, other councils, such as resource-strained rural and regional councils, do not have the finances or resourcing to do so. LGNSW Annual Conference resolutions support the position that the NSW Government should assist councils to make the transition, including providing expertise and funding for the new vehicles and the appropriate charging infrastructure *(see Appendix A, R5 and R4)*.

The recent funding round of the Electric vehicle fleets incentive is welcomed but LGNSW recommends a longer bidding window to allow more councils to submit an application. The funding available does not adequately cover the price difference between the cost of an EV and a traditional ICE vehicle, therefore there is still a price barrier for some councils. In addition, some councils with significant resource constraints will not have the capacity to bid for funding and require more resourcing and expert support from the NSW Government to be able to take advantage of the funding.

Some metro councils have been able to go further in supporting the transition of local taxis, ride share and hire cars to EVs. These form a significant part of GHG emissions within the LGAs.

Recommendation:

32. That the NSW Government support councils to electrify their fleets, including providing expertise and adequate ongoing funding for electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

Accelerating the take up of electric vehicles

Councils would like the NSW Government and Commonwealth Government to work together and take more bold action to accelerate the transition to EVs in order to protect the environment and human health. This should include stronger tax incentives for electric vehicles and stringent vehicle import standards, aligned with those of the EU.

Recommendation:

33. That the NSW Government work with the Commonwealth Government to accelerate the transition to EVs, including through stronger tax incentives and stringent vehicle import standards.

Appendix A: Relevant LGNSW Annual Conference Resolutions

R1. Update the NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy and urban planning framework (2022 Special – Category 2 Resolution X23 - Blacktown City Council)

"That Local Government NSW call on the NSW Government to mandate that all public car parking facilities, whether publicly or privately owned, be progressively made electric vehicle charger ready with the necessary electrical infrastructure and supply capacity."

R2. Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles (2022 Special – Category 2 Resolution X22 - Shoalhaven City Council)

That Local Government NSW lobbies the Federal Government and NSW Government to encourage and promote the uptake of electric vehicles through appropriate investment, concessions and with legislative support of charging and parking infrastructure in new residential and commercial developments.

R3. Electric vehicles (2022 – Category 2 Resolution X24 - Bega Valley Shire Council)

That LGNSW:

1. Call on the NSW Government to broaden its program to incentivise uptake of electric vehicles
2. Write to the NSW Government on its NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy, and calling for the following:
    a) introduce a state-wide charging network, including electric vehicles superhighways, commuter corridors and tourist drives, by 2025
    b) reduce the upfront costs of electric vehicles for the public and large fleet managers such as local councils, beyond the commitment of a $3,000 rebate for first 25,000 vehicles sold under $76,750
    c) provide councils with guidance on electric vehicle parking and charging infrastructure
    d) upskill workers to maintain NSW's electric vehicle fleet
    e) increase the target for electrification of the NSW Government fleet from 50% by 2030 to 75% by 2030
    f) include specific targets for electric vehicles in NSW of 20% by 2025, 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2035 of new vehicle sales
    g) include tax rebates, free registration and interest free loans, as provided by the Australian Capital Territory Government
3. Call on the NSW Government to fund regional electric vehicle charging station strategies that identify the locations, type and operating models for a charging station network

R4. Electrification of council vehicle fleets (2022 Special – Category 2 Resolution X24 - Blacktown City Council)

That Local Government NSW call on the NSW Government to work with local government to develop appropriate assistance to councils for the electrification of their vehicle fleets in order to respond to climate change.

R5. Council fleet transition to electric vehicles (2023 – Category 2 Resolution X69 - Bega Valley Shire Council)

That Local Government NSW calls on the NSW Government to broaden its program to incentivise uptake of electric vehicles by reducing the upfront costs of electric vehicles for large fleet managers such as local councils.

Appendix B: Summary of Recommendations

LGNSW requests that the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure consider all of our recommendations in their advice, recommendations and final report to the NSW Government.

The role of councils in charging infrastructure

1. That the NSW Government provide additional support to councils to navigate their increased responsibilities relating to charging infrastructure, over and above their core work.
2. The NSW Government introduce regular maintenance requirements for EV chargers to be carried out by providers.
3. The NSW Government mandate that EV providers are responsible for the full lifecycle of the asset, including safe disposal and recycling where possible.
4. That the NSW Government amend legislation so that liability for any incidents relating to non-council managed infrastructure falls with the provider, even if it occurs on council-managed land.
5. That the NSW Government provide clear and consistent guidance to councils on the legal process for installing chargers on council-managed operational and community-designated Crown land.

Flexibility in funding models and grants

6. That the NSW Government broaden grant funding criteria to include:
    a. electricity infrastructure upgrades and feasibility assessments.
    b. administrative costs, for areas with significant gaps in charging provision and where there may be a lack of commercial interest, such as in some regional and remote areas.
7. That the NSW Government introduce greater flexibility in grant funding for EV chargers and untie funding from a specific site, for example by requiring only one council letter of support covering multiple potential sites.

Use of public land and leasing arrangements

8. The NSW Government introduce guidance for funding arrangements for Charge Point Operators to cover the costs of the additional council workload.
9. That the NSW Government fund a public education program on the societal benefits of EVs, such as improved air quality, and the need to share car spaces with EVs.
10. That the NSW Government develop a standardised lease template for EV infrastructure installed on public land.
11. That the NSW Government introduce a streamlined process for updating Plans of Management for community land to allow for third party EV charging, for example,

by permitting batch updates or by removing the need for NSW Government approval.

12. That the NSW Government consult with councils to consider whether environmental assessment requirements under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* duplicate requirements under the *Roads Act 1993*, and whether these could be streamlined.

Identifying suitable charging locations

13. That the NSW Government fund and support the development of regional EV charging strategies in partnership with Joint Organisations (JOs) and Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs).
14. That the NSW Government provide funding for councils and JOs/ROCs to identify suitable sites and appropriate types of chargers to meet community needs, including engaging with DNSPs on infrastructure capacity.
15. That the NSW Government create a GIS map that highlights existing chargers, infrastructure gaps, capacity constraints, and suitable EV charging locations.
16. That the NSW Government establish state-level standardised site selection criteria to guide charger type, placement and accessibility.

Design and management of charging bays

17. That the NSW Government advocate to the Commonwealth Government to develop a national sign for electric vehicle charging spaces.
18. That the NSW Government introduce guidance on appropriate parking time limits and idle fees depending on the type of charger and location, and fines for ICE vehicles parking in EV-only spaces.

EV readiness in new and existing developments

19. That the NSW Government mandate all public car parking facilities be progressively made electric vehicle charger ready, with electrical infrastructure, supply capacity and safety planning.
20. That the NSW Government provide support to apartments, duplexes and strata-managed properties to overcome barriers to installing electric vehicle chargers, for example by leading coordination between DNSPs and strata committees.
21. That the NSW Government or Commonwealth Government introduce legislation to mandate charging infrastructure in new residential and commercial developments.

Electrification of heavy fleet

22. That the NSW Government work with councils to identify the need for, and support the rollout of, fast-charging stations for freight and heavy vehicles across regional NSW.

Hydrogen for freight and heavy vehicles

23. That the NSW Government advocate to the Commonwealth Government for:
    a. additional action to overcome barriers to investment in hydrogen infrastructure and vehicles.

b. guidance for councils on hydrogen funding programs available and clear pathways for councils to assist local businesses in accessing hydrogen funding opportunities.

24. That the NSW Government provide assistance to councils in planning for the necessary hydrogen infrastructure, including refuelling stations.

Ensuring a competitive market

25. That consideration be given to developing a state-wide panel of pre-approved providers, to streamline procurement and improve delivery standards.

Government intervention to address market failures

26. That the NSW Government upgrade the power grid as a matter of priority to meet the higher demand for electricity.

Unified charging platform and fees

27. That the NSW Government develop a single digital charging application that aggregates information from all Charge Point Operators, allowing users to locate, book and pay for EV charging through one system.
28. That the NSW Government mandate time-of-use pricing for EV chargers, including discounts during daylight hours and higher prices during peak periods.

Transiting workers from affected industries

29. That the NSW Government work with technical and further education providers to ensure accredited courses on EV and other alternative energy source vehicles are available across all of NSW, including in rural and regional areas.
30. That the NSW Government fund free careers advice and retraining opportunities for ICE mechanics.

Impact on local infrastructure

31. That the NSW Government provide funding to assist councils with the additional maintenance costs for local infrastructure, due to the additional weight of EVs.

Supporting the electrification of fleets

32. That the NSW Government support councils to electrify their fleets, including providing expertise and adequate ongoing funding for electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

Accelerating the take up of electric vehicles

33. That the NSW Government work with the Commonwealth Government to accelerate the transition to EVs, including through stronger tax incentives and stringent vehicle import standards.