FACT SHEET

MAKING EVS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL THROUGH ACC II

By reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants created by fossil fuel–based vehicles, electric vehicles (EVs) can deliver health and environmental benefits to an entire community. However, not everyone uses a personal vehicle to get around, and of those who do, not everyone is in a position to purchase an EV. Community-based clean mobility programs that use EVs for local transportation can help bring the benefits of EVs to communities without relying on individual purchases, while simultaneously improving transportation and mobility options. In fact, a number of clean mobility programs across the country have already begun providing communities with EV services that are emissions-free and tailored to their residents' needs.

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Míocar is an electric vehicle membership-based carsharing service providing 24/7 access to vehicles in designated locations throughout the San Joaquin Valley on an hour or daily basis.

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However, these programs serve only a tiny fraction of all the neighborhoods that might benefit from them. Moreover, the numbers of EVs these programs provide are often not enough to meet mobility needs even within the communities they serve. To help remedy these current constraints, the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) Rule—a set of statewide EV sales targets adopted by Nine states so far—contains provisions that will help to increase the number and size of clean mobility programs in states that have chosen to adopt the rule.[1]

The purposes of this document are to 1) discuss the opportunity this provision creates to incentivize automakers to provide more EVs to communities through clean mobility programs, 2) encourage community-based organizations, Native American tribal governments, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations to create more clean mobility programs, and 3) identify some best practices from existing programs that can help future programs provide the best services possible.

COMMUNITY-BASED CLEAN MOBILITY PROGRAMS IN ADVANCED CLEAN CARS II

ACC II is a set of regulations that states can adopt to reduce smog-causing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from their light-duty vehicle fleets.[2] It requires automakers to gradually ramp up EV sales from 35 percent in vehicle model year 2026 to 100 percent in vehicle model year 2035. Thus far, California, Colorado, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, Washington, Vermont, and Virginia have adopted these rules, while six other states and Washington D.C. are also considering adoption by the end of 2023.[3] To help automakers in these states meet ACC II's EV requirements, the regulations provide a handful of ways for automakers to sell fewer EVs than nominally required and make up the gap.

Among these options—known as "flexibilities" or "vehicle values"—are "environmental justice vehicle values," which aim to enhance equity outcomes via the deployment of EVs (this option is available until vehicle model year 2031).[4] One pathway automakers can use to earn environmental justice vehicle values is by providing new EVs at a minimum 25 percent discount for exclusive service in "community-based clean mobility programs." Investments in these programs could allow automakers to maximize economic benefits by selling more cars.

According to ACC II, a community-based clean mobility program is one that:

1. Provides access to clean mobility solutions other than vehicle ownership, including EV car sharing, ride sharing, van pools, ride hailing, or on-demand first-mile/last-mile services.

2. Serves a community in which at least 75 percent of the census tracts in the project area are:
   a. a disadvantaged community (defined by each state);
   b. a low-income community (defined by each state); or
   c. a tribal community (regardless of federal recognition).

3. Is implemented by:
   a. a community-based organization;
   b. a Native American tribal government (regardless of federal recognition); or
   c. a public agency or nonprofit organization that has received a letter of support from community members who will be impacted by the project.[5]

Certain clean mobility programs, such as Green Raiteros in California, already qualify as community-based clean mobility programs under ACC II, and many others are potentially eligible.[6]

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY-BASED CLEAN MOBILITY PROGRAMS

Disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and tribal communities have historically been overburdened with pollution that has negative impacts on health, including air pollution from gasoline-fueled vehicles. Their mobility options are often also limited, given the lack of public transit investments agencies have made in these communities. ACC II aims to significantly reduce air pollution and expand clean mobility options, and it is important that the communities most burdened by transportation emissions receive maximal benefits from these programs.

Eligible program developers under ACC II—i.e., community-based organizations, Native American tribal governments, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations—can help more communities access EVs and the benefits of ACC II by creating more community-based clean mobility programs. These developers can learn from the best practices of existing programs to ensure that their initiatives bring the greatest benefits to the most people.

California EVgo charging station in parking lot, for use while customers shop.

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED CLEAN MOBILITY PROGRAMS

We surveyed five programs across the country that qualify or are likely to qualify as a community-based clean mobility program and center equity in their design: Evie Carshare (Minnesota), Our Community CarShare Sacramento (California), SiLVERS (Missouri), and Green Raiteros (California). By comparing these programs' approaches to equity and by drawing on resources such as the Greenlining Institute's "*Clean Mobility Equity* playbook, we compiled four best practices that could help future programs receive credits under ACC II and provide optimal services to communities.[7]

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1. Early and Thoughtful Community Engagement

Early and thoughtful community engagement is key to understanding a community's mobility needs and designing solutions that can effectively meet those needs. For example, Evie Carshare—the first and largest all-electric, renewably powered, municipally owned, free-floating car sharing service (where drivers can start and end their ride in different locations) in the United States—executed an extensive community engagement project from 2019 to 2020 in partnership with the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis and the local nonprofit organization East Metro Strong.[8] Developers worked closely with 10 community-based organizations that represent predominantly BIPOC and low-income neighborhoods to identify transportation challenges and determine how electric car sharing could mitigate or eliminate these challenges.

To test the concept for the program, organizers carried out focused prototyping sessions with roughly 20 residents to understand what value the program would bring to them and determine what types of trips they would use EV car sharing for. Organizers also conducted an online survey with 300 resident participants to gain insight on how to raise community awareness of the program. The findings from these and other engagement efforts were published in a community engagement report in early 2021, a year before the program's launch.[9]

Since the initial report was released, Evie Carshare has adopted most of the recommendations, including creating a user-friendly app for clients, providing options for accessing the service without a smart phone (including by integrating with the region's transit card), and introducing a rate structure for qualified low-income users, discussed below. This has contributed to a rapid increase in ridership, with over 5,000 approved members at the start of 2023. Membership is projected to increase to 8,000 approved members by the end of 2023.[10]

2. Affordability for All

The cost of car ownership is going up every year, putting private vehicles out of reach for an increasing number of people living in the United States. According to AAA, the average cost of car ownership in 2022 was $894 per month,

11 percent higher than in 2021.[11] Community-based clean mobility programs can address rising car costs by replacing the burdensome expense of owning an EV with just basic service fees for using one. Evie Carshare—under "Hourcar" at the time—expanded access to cars by lowering its initial rates by nearly 40 percent in 2021 and implementing Access PLUS, a rate structure available to users whose household income is no more than 50 percent of the Area Median Income; these users account for one-third of Evie's total ridership—at the end of 2022 this accounted for about 480 drivers.[12] Access PLUS provides the lowest rates, a monthly driving credit of $6, and a damage fee waiver, all for $1 per month. Even non-Access PLUS rates are extremely affordable, roughly half of what most other one-way car sharing services charge.

Our Community CarShare Sacramento—which makes subsidized transportation available to participating residents living in affordable housing communities within disadvantaged neighborhoods in Sacramento—offers even greater affordability. Residents of the disadvantaged neighborhoods served by the program can have free access to EVs within the service area for up to three hours at a time.[13]

It is important to note that as programs strive to become financially self-sustaining, they should not arbitrarily compromise or sacrifice the affordability of their rates.[14]

3. Convenient and Reliable System Design

A community-based clean mobility program should offer options that are just as convenient and easy to access as private cars. Evie Carshare, for example, has adopted a semi-free-floating model under which users can begin and end their travel at different locations, as long as trips begin and end within the 35-square-mile service area. Users also receive credit when returning their Evie Carshare vehicle to any network EV charging station. This model is more convenient for users than the common two-way car-share model, which requires the user to return a car to the same location where it was picked up.

There are also programs that incorporate existing services, such as SiLVERS in St. Louis. SiLVERS has electrified an existing shuttle service that distributes food to the Northside Youth and Senior Service Center and gives to seniors for medical appointments, shopping trips, and social activities.[15] Leveraging existing resources and services is a great way to make a program more accessible to potential users and to save costs.

4. Multi-Sector Approach

This best practice is derived from the Greenlining Institute's *Clean Mobility Equity* playbook, which identifies multi-sector strategies as a factor in successful programs.[16] Multi-sector approaches provide co-benefits by simultaneously addressing multiple issues, such as by using a mobility program to build capacity and wealth within a community through job creation, workforce development, protection of workers from exploitation, and asset accumulation. Taking a multi-sector approach to designing community-based clean mobility programs is key to the programs' sustainability and capacity to bring about transformative systemic change.

This is exemplified by Green Raiteros, which operates principally in Fresno, Madera, Kings, and Kern Counties in California. Focusing not only on reducing emissions and vehicle-miles traveled, but also on increasing access to medical and other services, the program seeks to simultaneously address numerous community goals: transportation justice, health justice, climate justice, environmental justice, and economic justice. Such a multi-sector approach reflects the wide range of community priorities. For instance, to help advance economic justice, the program allows local citizens to earn money as drivers of community-owned EVs, helping fellow residents access critical services such as medical appointments, thereby building community capacity and keeping wealth and employment opportunities within the communities.[17]

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ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES

Below is a list of additional best practices compiled from the surveyed programs.

- Ensure early policy leadership by decision makers such as mayors, councilmembers, and city managers in spearheading and supporting the deployment of community-based clean mobility programs (Green Raiteros).[18]

- Start the contracting processes early (Our Community CarShare Sacramento).[19]

- Ensure that sufficient funding is allocated for long-term, on-site project staff support (Our Community CarShare Sacramento).[20]

- Ensure language access and justice by allocating sufficient project staff time and budget for translation and the creation of multilingual outreach materials (Our Community CarShare Sacramento, Green Raiteros).[21]

- Make the car reservation system as accessible and convenient as possible and provide alternatives to computer/smart phone–based systems (Our Community CarShare Sacramento).[22]

- Allocate resources more flexibly and efficiently through public–private partnerships led primarily by community-based organizations or community-centered nonprofits (Evie Carshare, Our Community Carshare Sacramento).[23]

CONCLUSION

ACC II's environmental justice vehicle values serve as an opportunity to create a win-win situation in which automakers meet their zero-emissions requirements and gain economic benefits and communities gain access to more EVs. For more communities to benefit from EV mobility, program developers are encouraged to incorporate the best practices identified above into their program design and operation and maximize the environmental justice vehicle values available under ACC II.

ENDNOTES

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23 HOURCAR, "Twin Cities Electric Vehicle Mobility Network"; Isles, "GoTrenton!"; CARB, "Our Community CarShare Sacramento."