

EV Charging Infrastructure Training

Part 2: Business Models & Financing



Los Angeles County hosted a five-part training series on electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure. Part 2: Business Models & Financing provides guidance to property owners, local agencies, and fleet operators on selecting and financing EV charging solutions that strike a balance between capital costs, operational control, and potential revenue. The California Energy Commission funded the series.

4 EV Charging Business Models

Selecting the right business model for EV charging infrastructure is a critical decision that impacts project costs, operational control, revenue potential, and long-term sustainability. Organizations must balance their available capital, internal expertise, risk tolerance, and strategic objectives when choosing between ownership models.

The four primary approaches offer distinct advantages and trade-offs. Understanding these models helps align charging strategies with organizational goals, whether prioritizing maximum revenue control, minimizing capital expenditure, or balancing operational complexity with technical expertise.

Model	Best For	Advantages/Disadvantages
Organization Owned Site host owns, installs, operates	Capital budgets, internal operations	100% user fee revenue, complete control/ High upfront cost, O&M + trained staff required, risk obsolete tech
Charging-As-A-Service Third-party vendor owns, maintains; host pays monthly fee	Limited capital and staff, predictable costs	No upfront costs, predictable monthly expenses, vendor does O&M/ No user fee revenue, contracts limit flexibility, less price control
Third-Party Owned Private company installs/operates	Limited capital, public facilities	No capital investment, operational risk transferred, lease revenue/ Limited control, vendor sets price, complex contract
Hybrid Model Site host = Level 2, vendor = DCFC	Multiple sites, varied driver needs	Retain some revenue control, flexible, scalable/ Complex management, integration challenges, split revenue

Financing

Financing EV charging projects requires planning around “who pays,” utility rates, and incentives. Costs are influenced by electricity pricing, time-of-use rates, and demand charges, which can be high for DC fast charging but reduced through smart scheduling. Utilities and government programs offer rebates and grants to offset installation costs, with additional funding often available for underserved communities. State, local, and LA County programs can be combined to lower upfront expenses.

Strong applications that align with program goals, provide clear documentation, and highlight community and environmental benefits are most likely to succeed.



Case Studies: 4 EV Charging Business Models

1) Organization-Owned: Retail Center

A local property management firm represents an out-of-state property owner. The firm purchases, installs, and maintains a mix of public Level 2 and DC fast chargers.

- **Firm leverages:** CALeVIP rebate and utility charger rebate
- **Firm pays:** Electric bill, network fee, and maintenance
- **Firm receives:** Driver billing revenue, minus a small service fee
- **Results:** Increased foot traffic and tenant satisfaction; Marketing campaign on retail center's sustainability efforts

2) Charging-as-a-Service: Municipal Fleet Facility

The municipality needs workplace charging for employee EVs. A third-party vendor installs 20 Level 2 chargers with a 5-year service contract.

- **City leverages:** Municipal utility rebate program
- **City pays:** Fixed monthly service fee, electricity usage
- **City receives:** Vendor guarantee of 99% uptime, and employee satisfaction and recruitment benefits
- **Results:** Predictable budget planning for fleet electrification, and no internal EV expertise required

3) Third-Party Owned: Grocery Store Chain

A regional grocery chain wants to attract EV customers without capital investment. Vendor installs 8 DC fast chargers across 4 store locations.

- **Store leverages:** No upfront costs or rebate applications needed, vendor handles all permitting and utility coordination
- **Store pays:** Nothing upfront; provides land lease
- **Store receives:** Percentage of revenue share from charging fees, increased customer dwell time (30-45 minutes per visit)
- **Results:** Higher grocery sales from EV drivers, competitive advantage over stores without charging



4) Hybrid Model: University Campus

A university needs both student/visitor charging and fleet charging. They own 50 Level 2 chargers for daily campus use. A vendor operates 6 DC fast chargers for visitors and rapid charging needs.

- **University leverages:** State funding for Level 2 installations, utility make-ready program for both systems
- **University pays:** Level 2 equipment, installation, and maintenance; electricity for all charging
- **University receives:** 100% revenue from Level 2 charging; 15% revenue share from DC fast charging
- **Results:** Supports campus sustainability goals, generates revenue while serving diverse user needs

Resources

View the five-part training series and get downloadable resources at: isd.lacounty.gov/electric-vehicles-and-charging-stations/.

Questions? Contact the LA County Internal Services Department of Clean Transportation & Energy at evprogram@isd.lacounty.gov.

Important websites:

- Funding Finder for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and chargers: fundingfindertool.org
- CALeVIP Program: calevip.org
- Communities in Charge: thecommunitiesincharge.org
- SCE Make-Ready Program: cloud.sce.com/teas
- South Coast AQMD Voucher Program and State Rebates: aqmd.gov/home/programs