



Models for Interagency Collaboration on Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Programs

Introduction

State Energy Offices, State Departments of Transportation, and other agencies are entering into agreements to coordinate and collaborate on transportation electrification initiatives to support broader state energy and transportation goals. The impetus for many of these agreements was the establishment of the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program under the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* in 2021. The NEVI program provides formula funding to states to strategically deploy an interconnected network of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to support seamless EV travel, and to facilitate data collection, access, and reliability.¹ The NEVI program funds are directed from the U.S. Department of Transportation to State Departments of Transportation (SDOTs) via formula; however, collaboration with State Energy Offices and other state agencies for the planning and implementation of the program is recommended to build infrastructure in a strategic, efficient, and equitable manner. Many states have taken steps to formalize interagency coordination for the NEVI program and other initiatives through legislation, Executive Orders, Memorandum of Understandings (MOU), and EV Working Groups. This document outlines examples of formal agreements for successful interagency collaboration for NEVI and other state-led EV programs including legislation from Washington and Utah; MOUs from Idaho, Alabama, and Alaska; and Executive Orders from South Carolina and Colorado.

Benefits of Interagency Agreements and Multi-Agency Collaboration

States have been coordinating across agencies on EV policy and program implementation throughout the last decade. Cross-agency collaboration has been vital to ensuring coordinated planning, program, and policy design between agencies and avoiding duplicative efforts. Once formal interagency agreements are established, they can create a framework for other state agencies to be involved with transportation electrification planning and enhancing the economic benefits to the state. For example, an interagency agreement may direct the State Employment Office to coordinate with the State Energy Office and other state agencies on enhancing the state's existing workforce policies and programs to advance the EV industry and create jobs in the state.

Another benefit of multi-agency collaboration is that it can create momentum and inspire creativity on other state projects. For example, the novelty and nuance that is necessary to support the EV industry could spark creativity and the ability to experiment with new approaches on other government efforts. It can also facilitate multi-agency collaboration on other initiatives like solar development, workforce development, and other energy issues.

With increased federal and state investments in EV infrastructure, shifting to a formal engagement strategy is an efficient way to boost collaboration between agencies and align statewide transportation electrification initiatives.

Interagency Agreement Model Types and Examples

States are using a variety of strategies to enhance coordination across agencies on transportation electrification initiatives, such as implementing Executive Orders, memorandums of understanding, and legislation. Following are summaries of the different types of interagency agreement models, and examples from the states.

LEGISLATION

Some states have passed legislation that directs state agencies to establish a cross-agency group focused on the implementation of an EV program or policy. Using legislation to direct cross-agency collaboration on EV infrastructure planning can be an effective tool in creating a formal mechanism to involve various state agencies that may not typically be involved in EV infrastructure planning.

State examples:

- In March 2022, **Washington** Governor Inslee signed the \$17 billion [Move Ahead Washington](#) transportation package, which is a 16-year plan to preserve the state's infrastructure, reduce carbon emissions, expand transit options, and create equitable transportation policies for the state.² The legislation also created a new Interagency EV Coordinating Council (IEVCC) to improve interagency collaboration on state-wide efforts to accelerate EV adoption and reduce transportation-sector greenhouse gas emissions. The IEVCC is co-led by the Departments of Commerce (State Energy Office) and Transportation, and include the State Efficiency and Environmental Performance Office, Office of Financial Management, Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction, Utilities and Transportation Commission, and the Departments of Agriculture, Ecology, Enterprise Services, and Health.³ The first major responsibility of IEVCC is to develop a statewide transportation electrification strategy through a robust community engagement process to ensure EV infrastructure investments are accessible and equitable to all residents in the state.⁴ Other responsibilities include identifying and coordinating all state and federal EV-related funding, and engaging with local governments, communities, and the Environmental Justice Council to ensure statewide EV investments, grant distribution, programs, and other transportation electrification activities benefit vulnerable and overburdened communities.⁵

The Washington Department of Commerce (State Energy Office) and Washington State DOT assigned appropriate staff from each agency to lead the council's coordination work as well as provide ongoing reports to the governor and legislative committees on transportation, energy, and economic development.

- In **Utah**, the state Legislature passed a law directing the state Department of Transportation to create a statewide EV Charging Network plan through Section 216 of the [Department of Transportation Act](#)⁶, effective July 1, 2021. The law directed the Utah DOT to consult with relevant state agencies and divisions including the Utah Office of Energy Development (State Energy Office), the Department of Environmental Quality, the Division of Facilities Construction and Management, and the Department of Natural Resources. The Utah DOT and Utah's Office of Energy Development coordinated on the creation of the plan that resulted in a state-wide framework to build out EV charging along the state's key corridors and to prepare for the EV Charging capacity needs in Utah's urban and rural areas.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a type of agreement between two or more parties to proceed on an intended common line of action. Establishing an MOU is a critical starting point to initiate cross-agency involvement in statewide EV infrastructure planning and helps to formalize agencies' roles and responsibilities in achieving the state's transportation electrification goals.

Examples:

- The **Idaho** Governor’s Office of Energy and Mineral Resources (OEMR), Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) signed an [MOU](#) to establish roles and responsibilities related to EV charging infrastructure. The purpose of the agreement is to increase interagency collaboration on EV charging infrastructure planning and implementation funded through NEVI and ensuring EV charging investment in the state is strategic, coordinated, efficient, and equitable.

The specific objectives of the MOU include the following: 1) Provide for a continued cooperation and coordination between the parties 2) Ensure adequate information and education is provided among the Parties regarding programs administered by each of the Parties 3) Eliminate duplication of effort 4) Ensure effective communication procedures are established and maintained 5) Provide clear lines of communication relevant to any Interagency Work Agreement by specifying the contact person and their position 6) Provide that financial requirements of any project will be made a part of an IWA directed toward achieving maximum return for funds between the Parties, 7) Provide a mechanism for informing and receiving input from the public.⁷

The MOU outlines mutual responsibilities such as requiring program staff from each agency to meet regularly to coordinate efforts related to EV programs and funding. In addition, The Chief Engineer of Idaho Transportation Department, the Air Quality Division Administrator of the DEQ, and the Administrator of the OEMR are required to meet annually to coordinate and plan for ongoing and new EV program initiatives.⁸

Idaho Interagency Work Agreement

Idaho OEMR, ITD, and DEQ created an Interagency Work Agreement as a subordinate of the MOU to address how the state will implement the NEVI program. The agreement declares OEMR as the lead agency for NEVI implementation and outlines OEMR’s role as the State Energy Office in creating statewide energy policy, planning, and program development. The agreement details ITD’s role in overseeing the disbursement of Federal Highway Administrations (FHWA) funds and outlines their responsibility in adhering to Title 23 USC requirements and playing a central role in the designation of FHWA’s Alternative Fuel Corridor designations. The agreement also cites DEQ as the lead agency in assessing the environmental impacts from the transportation sector as well as being the lead agency for the Volkswagen Settlement Trust and associated EVSE charging programs. Given the DEQ’s involvement with state-led EV charging programs, the agreement outlines their role in coordinating with OEMR and ITD on NEVI. Similar to the MOU, the Interagency Work Agreement details NEVI roles and responsibilities for each agency as well as how the agencies will collaborate on the planning and deployment of NEVI.

- **Alabama** established a formal interagency agreement between the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (Alabama State Energy Office) and the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) outlining the roles and responsibilities for managing NEVI. The agreement states that ALDOT will delegate authority, responsibilities, and funding for NEVI to the Alabama State Energy Office and for NEVI to be administrated by the State Energy Office.

The agreement outlines the Alabama State Energy Office’s full responsibility in being the lead agency managing the NEVI program including notifying interested parties of funding opportunities, developing solicitations for proposals, reviewing applications, developing program agreements and guidance, submitting required reports, and communicating with subrecipients on the status of the project.⁹ While the Alabama State Energy Office is the lead agency on NEVI, the agreement states that ALDOT must assist the State Energy Office in the submission of any reports or information required by NEVI to federal or state agencies.

- **Alaska** Energy Authority (Alaska State Energy Office) and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities signed a [Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\)](#) to provide a framework of collaboration between the two agencies to ensure EV charging station investments by the State are strategic, coordinated, and equitable while also adhering to Title 23 and 2 CFR 200 requirements¹⁰. The agreement states that both agencies will meet monthly to coordinate efforts relative to NEVI program and funding. In addition, the program management staff from each agency will meet annually for a strategic planning session to coordinate existing and future energy programs and to draft a cooperative work plan for future EV projects.

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Executive orders have been used to develop working groups and informal collaborations involving a group of experts working to achieve specified goals. Executive orders create momentum for various state agencies to convene and make decisions to support strategic EV infrastructure buildout that is unique to the state's needs.

Examples:

- **South Carolina** Governor Henry McMaster issued an [Executive Order](#) in October 2022 that authorized South Carolina DOT (SCDOT) to convene an Interagency EV Working Group, South Carolina Department of Commerce (SCDOC) to establish an EV economic development initiative and website, and South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) to conduct a workforce supply gap analysis. The Interagency EV Working Group was tasked with developing a comprehensive plan for the deployment of EV-related resources and infrastructure in the state. Other responsibilities of the Working Group include providing recommendations for charging infrastructure along the interstate highway system and in rural portions of the state, identifying funding mechanisms available to the state, political subdivisions, or private parties, and evaluate methods for implementation of the plan.

The Executive Order highlights the collaborative efforts of SCDOT and the South Carolina Energy Office in the creation of the state's NEVI plan and the importance of continued interagency coordination and public engagement in the implementation of the NEVI program.

The Interagency EV Working Group consists of the SCDOT, the South Carolina Energy Office, SCDOC, SCDEW, South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and South Carolina State Fiscal Accountability Authority. The need and opportunity for workforce development and upskilling prompted the addition to the working group of the South Carolina Technical College System.

The SC Interagency EV Working Group meets monthly to hear from a variety of stakeholder category representatives. These regular meetings provide a catalyst for further interagency collaboration, such as the South Carolina Energy Office's work with SCDEW on solar workforce development.

- In July 2017 then **Colorado** Governor John Hickenlooper issued an [Executive Order](#) to support Colorado's transition to clean energy. Part of the order directed the Colorado State Energy Office and partner agencies to develop a plan for building out EV fast-charging corridor stations across the state. Prior to 2017, the Colorado Energy Office had been working with the Colorado Department of Transportation on the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, and with CDOT and other agencies on development of Colorado's VW Beneficiary Mitigation Plan. The Executive Order formalized a process for intra-agency engagement, creating a framework for continued collaboration on NEVI and other EV programs. This agency partnership was strengthened in Governor Jared Polis's 2019 Executive Order on zero emission vehicles, which created a transportation electrification working group made up of numerous state agencies which among other things updated Colorado's VW BMP.

In addition, the Colorado Energy Office and Colorado Department of Transportation signed an Interagency Agreement to document how NEVI funds will be transferred from CDOT to the Colorado Energy Office and how the two agencies will coordinate on NEVI. The MOU includes a statement of work that outlines the objectives of NEVI and how Colorado Energy Office will carry out the key tasks to support the NEVI program. The statement also details how Colorado Energy Office will coordinate with CDOT on tracking and reporting progress towards Justice40 targets as well as providing status updates and year-end reports.

Recommendations for Interagency Agreements and Interagency Groups

States have a variety of tools at their disposal to support interagency coordination on transportation electrification initiatives. Regardless of the type of agreement used, states may consider incorporating the following considerations into an agreement:

- It is important to **clearly define the responsibilities and authority of the interagency group** so agencies can make decisions, recommendations, and support the state's clean transportation strategy. For example, if the interagency agreement requires the agencies to review and consult on any state-wide EV programs, the agreement should clearly outline what the review process must entail. The agreement should outline whether agencies are required to grant final approval to programs and policies and outline the process for reviewing programs.
- For an interagency council, require an agency to nominate a staff member with **appropriate expertise and bandwidth** to adhere to the roles and responsibilities of the council is recommended.
- If a state agency hires a consultant to assist with any components of the project including site analysis, community engagement, contracting, etc. it is important to include **language in the interagency agreement that outlines how consultants will share information and interact with other agencies**.
- **Providing a degree of flexibility in the roles and responsibilities of each agency** is vital as EV charging projects develop, improved technology emerges, and other needs are identified.
- **Creating language in the interagency agreement** that outlines the cadence of meetings, and how each agency will provide updates and seek input from each agency.

Implementing an interagency agreement can help State Energy Offices and State Departments of Transportation leverage expertise in other state agencies to develop and implement comprehensive transportation electrification plans, policies. A formalized agreement can clearly define each agency's role while providing flexibility to agencies to address emerging needs and opportunities as they arise, while enabling the state to meet its transportation and energy goals.

Acknowledgements

This report was authored by Delaney Dixon, Clean Transportation Program Manager, NASEO, with support from Cassie Powers and David Terry of NASEO.

The National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) would also like to thank Tonia Buell, Washington Department of Transportation; Deborah Reynolds, Washington Department of Commerce (Washington State Energy Office); Emily Her, Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources; Shonda Gray, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (Alabama State Energy Office); Audrey Alstrom and Jodi McKee, Alaska Energy Authority; Sara Bazemore, Stacey Washington, Rene Kelly, South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff, State Energy Office; and Christian Williss, Colorado Energy Office for sharing their expertise on interagency coordination.

Notice

This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by an agency of the United States Government. Neither the United States Government nor any agency thereof, or any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the United States Government or any agency thereof. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Government or any agency thereof.

Sponsors

The material is based upon work sponsored by the Department of Energy under Award Number DE-EE0010189. The contents are intended for informational purposes only. The authors are solely responsible for errors and omissions.

Appendix

Liias, Carlyle, Saldana, Cleveland, Das, Dhingra, Hunt, et al. 2022. *Move Ahead Washington*. Vol. ESSB 5974. <https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2021-22/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/5974-SL.pdf?q=20230411084305>

The Alaska Energy Authority, The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Memorandum of Understanding, 2022. https://evstates.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/AK-MOA-for-AK-EVSE-Infrastructure-Implementation-Plan-AEA-and-DOT_V.0.6-Oct-10-2022.pdf

The Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources, Idaho Transportation Department, and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, "Memorandum of Understanding." December 15, 2023. <https://evstates.org/wp-content/uploads/pda/2022/12/FINAL-MOU-AND-IWA.pdf>

State of South Carolina Office of the Governor, Executive Order No. 2022-31, October 12, 2022. <https://governor.sc.gov/sites/governor/files/Documents/Executive-Orders/2022-10-12%20FILED%20Executive%20Order%20No.%202022-31%20-%20Establishing%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Initiatives%20%26%20Interagency%20Working%20Group.pdf>

South Carolina Department of Transportation Interagency EV Working Group links. <https://www.scdot.org/projects/NEVI%20Formula-Program.aspx>

South Carolina Department of Commerce EV webpage. <https://scpowersev.com/>

State of Colorado Office of the Governor, Executive Order No. 2017-015, Supporting Colorado's Energy Transition, July 2017. https://drive.google.com/file/d/14OLX75zXN8JBM0v4k3zjKI_27fiWN8rB/view

Utah State Legislature, Department of Transportation Administrative Act, 2021, Section 216. https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title72/Chapter1/C72-1_1800010118000101.pdf

Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. n.d. "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program Fact Sheet | Federal Highway Administration."
- 2 Liias, Carlyle, Saldana, Cleveland, Das, Dhingra, Hunt, et al. 2022. *Move Ahead Washington*. Vol. ESSB 5974.
- 3 Washington Department of Commerce. 2023. "[EV Coordinating Council](#)." Washington State Department of Commerce. 2023.
- 4 Washington Department of Commerce. 2023. "[EV Coordinating Council](#)." Washington State Department of Commerce. 2023.
- 5 "[Washington State Plan for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment](#)." 2022.
- 6 Department of Transportation Administrative Act, Section 216
- 7 The Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources, Idaho Transportation Department, and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, "[Memorandum of Understanding](#)." December 15, 2023.
- 8 IBID
- 9 Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Department of Transportation, "Interagency Agreement", July 11, 2022.
- 10 The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Alaska Energy Authority, "Memorandum of Agreement", 2022.