

Bringing EV charging to Affordable Housing Communities

Alora - San Marcos, CA



Property Details:

- 100 units | Lowrise | 4 buildings | 3 stories each
- Above ground parking lot: 171 total parking spaces spread out around buildings
- Unassigned parking | First Come - First Serve
- Owned and Managed by Affirmed Housing, built with Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Funds in 2023

Background:

- Tenants had requested EV charging. No formal survey was taken.

EV Charging Project Details:

- SCS Electric was the turnkey electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) vendor which hired a local contractor.
- EV-readiness (stub ups and conduit) was required by code and 16 EV-ready parking spaces were designed by the architect and development team prior to construction and were strategically located throughout the property.



Pre-existing EV Charging Set Up:

- EV-ready parking spaces but no EVSE installed.

Technology Solution: Autel Level 2 chargers operated by Buzz

- Property management wanted a level 2 charging setup that enables a quality charging experience for users.
- The chargers selected provide up to 80 amps of power, a 5-year warranty, and a viewing screen to make initiating a charge easy.
- Residents pay per charge through Buzz's app. App users are not required to load money into the app, or pay for the app or membership within the app. Residents pay 99 cents per session for transaction costs, the cost of electricity, plus 10 cents per kWh to the property owner, and 5 cents per kWh to Buzz.
- Residents can schedule a charge session up to 7 days in advance to ensure they have a charger waiting for them, when it is needed. Chargers may be reserved for up to 12 hours to allow for overnight charging to avoid idle fees.
- Buzz monitors all chargers to prevent downtime, addresses resident questions and concerns regarding the chargers, allowing the property management team to focus on other maintenance with their property.

Project Financials:

- Final cost before incentives: \$140,399;
 - Total costs included 16 chargers (34 ports) with a 5-year warranty, 6 years of networking costs, support services from Buzze, and cellular connectivity, pedestals, cable management, labor & installation, O&M, shipping, and sales tax
 - Cost per charger including installation: approximately \$8,780.
- Incentives: California Communities in Charge rebate covered over \$132,399 of project costs. The rebate covers up to \$8500 per charger.
- The property owner was only responsible for labor costs to install chargers – which came out to just under \$500 per charger, ~ \$8,000 total.
- Because of the incentives, the property owner is expecting to break even after about a year, with additional funds supporting positive NOI in the future.



Takeaways:

- Incentive programs like Communities in Charge enable charging infrastructure to be installed even at affordable housing properties
- Providing turn-key services and support from start to finish (when chargers go live) is important to multifamily property developers, owners, and operators, particularly companies in the affordable space.
- EV-readiness codes paired with no-permit installations can help streamline the process for owners to install chargers when the demand for EVs rises.

Installation Process:

- Installation took 2 months. No permits were required as the spaces were EV-ready or EV-capable to begin with. The original contractor filled out a form stating they were already EV-ready spots that just needed chargers installed.

Current Use and Resident Feedback:

- The ownership group has decided to put more chargers in at multiple other multifamily properties in their portfolio as a result of their experience on this project.



- Prefabricated pedestal foundations to house the junction box/wire under a flat plate during the initial construction of the complex would have lowered costs even further, possibly saving up to \$3,500 for every 2 parking spots where EV chargers were to be installed in the future.

