



# Agenda Item Report

## City Commission - Apr 06 2021

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Department	Staff Contact
Transit	Adam Weigel, Transit and Parking Manager

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### Recommendations

Consider authorizing City staff to submit a 2021 Low or No Emission Vehicle Program grant application to the Federal Transit Administration for battery electric buses with the Center for Transportation and the Environment 501(c)3, Gillig Corporation, Charge Point Inc., DoubleMap, and University of Kansas Facilities Planning & Development as sole source vendors and consider authorizing the Mayor to sign a Letter of Support for the application.

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### Executive Summary

On February 11, 2021, the Federal Transit Administration issued an opportunity to apply for grant funding to support the acquisition of Low or No Emission Transit vehicles and supporting facilities. In an effort to continue progress toward City of Lawrence sustainability goals and to improve the quality of fixed route transit, Lawrence Transit is proposing submitting a grant to the Low or No Emission Program (Low-No Program) for two (2) battery electric buses and one (1) charging station, with a phased option of one (1) battery electric bus. The FTA [Low or No Emission Vehicle Program - 5339\(c\)](#) application is due April 12, 2021.

In partnership with the Center for Transportation and the Environment a 501(c)3, Gillig Corporation, Charge Point, Inc., DoubleMap, and University of Kansas Facilities Planning & Development as sole source vendors, per the federal grant requirements, submission with vendors and competitive selection of grant awards by Federal Transit Administration meets the federal requirements for competitive selection. This procurement allows us to maximize the technical capabilities of our service contractor for familiarity with Gillig buses and parts inventory relevant to our entire Lawrence Transit heavy duty bus fleet. The partnership with the Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with a mission to improve the health of our climate and communities by bringing people together to develop and commercialize clean, efficient, and sustainable transportation technologies ensures our team has the technical capacity to deliver a successful follow-on project, building on experience from the ongoing pilot project. CTE will serve as project manager/technical support and work with the project team for the duration of the project, including evaluation.

Projects for FTA funding in this grant application will be evaluated on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate how the proposed project will address an unmet need for capital investment in vehicles and/or supporting facilities and demonstrate how the proposed project will: reduce energy consumption; reduce harmful emissions; and reduce direct carbon emissions.

This grant would allow Lawrence Transit to continue implementing its Vehicle Replacement Program, which ensures buses are replaced once they have reached the end of their useful life, and would allow continued progress toward City of Lawrence sustainability goals. As in the pilot project, Lawrence Transit will continue to:

- Assess how battery electric technology performs in our operating environment
- Better understand operational implications (routes, charging, availability, etc.)
- Evaluate operating/maintenance costs vs. diesel
- Develop fleet electrification plan and timeline based on findings

The Low or No Emission Vehicle Program grant application advances the Strategic Plan Infrastructure, Asset Management, and Connectivity Outcome area by ensuring a well-maintained fleet, improving the safety and comfort of using transit in Lawrence, and sustainably moving people throughout our community.

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## **Alignment to Strategic Plan**

Infrastructure, Asset Management, and Connectivity

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## **Fiscal Impact**

The fiscal impact to the City will depend on the final scope of the grant application. The estimated maximum local contribution would be \$694,250. This item was not in the 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Program, but will be proposed as part of the 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program, contingent on receipt of federal funding. The City of Lawrence portion of the matching funds will be provided through the Transit Reserve Fund and will have no impact on the General Fund.

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## **Action Requested**

Authorize City staff to submit a 2021 Low or No Emission Vehicle Program grant application to the Federal Transit Administration for battery electric buses with the Center for Transportation and the Environment 501(c)3, Gillig Corporation, Charge Point Inc., DoubleMap, and University of Kansas Facilities Planning & Development as sole source vendors and authorize the Mayor to sign a Letter of Support for the application.

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## **Attachments**

[Electrify Lawrence Phase 2 Transit Letter of Support](#)

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# City of Lawrence

CITY COMMISSION

**MAYOR**  
BRADLEY R. FINKELDEI

**COMMISSIONERS**  
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JENNIFER ANANDA, JD, MSW  
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April 6, 2021

Mrs. Amy Volz  
Office of Program Management  
Federal Transit Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Lawrence Transit Submission to FTA's FY 2021 Low or No Emission Vehicle Program

Dear Mrs. Volz:

I am writing to express my support for Lawrence Transit System's project "Electrify Lawrence Transit, Phase 2" submitted in response to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) FY 2021 Low or No Emission Vehicle Program. This project is an exciting opportunity for our community and we look forward to the continued transition toward zero-emission buses in their fleet. Reducing emissions is of utmost importance in the efforts to slow down climate change, and this is a major opportunity to continue making the change to the city's transit fleet.

Sustainability is of great importance to the City of Lawrence, which recently committed to converting to 100% renewable energies in municipal operations — including public transit — by 2040. Continuing to convert our fleet to electric buses will be critical to meeting our aggressive climate goals. This will also be an excellent example of our continued cooperation with the University of Kansas in public transit.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this project. We fully support Lawrence Transit System in their efforts and look forward to the deployment of these zero-emission buses in our community.

Sincerely,

Bradley R. Finkeldei, Mayor



We are committed to providing excellent city services that enhance the quality of life for the Lawrence Community