

STUDY FEASIBILITY OF CITY POLICY – PURCHASING OF ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES – revised 7-23-02

The Cambridge Department of Public Works (DPW), Traffic and Parking (TPD) and Water Departments (CWD) have reviewed the options available to the City for Alternative Fuel Vehicles and improved fleet fuel economy aimed at reducing our reliance on imported oil, the emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG's) and conventional air pollutants (NO_x, SO_x, VOCs). The current and future options available to the City are as follows:

- 1) Electric
- 2) Compressed natural gas
- 3) Hybrid (electric/gasoline)
- 4) Biodiesel
- 5) Purchase of more fuel efficient standard vehicles
- 6) Improved fuel economy derived from driver training and instruction
- 7) Enforce current policy on reduced idling times for vehicles

The City currently has experience with Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and electric vehicles. The TPD has 2 electric vehicles that have been in use for 2 years. This experience has been poor at best with reliability and range continuing to be the major problems. The CWD currently is utilizing a single CNG full size pick-up truck that has been in service for one year. The experience has been excellent. The one issue for an expanded CNG fleet is the location of the CNG fill stations. The station that is currently being used is on Route 128 (Old Roy Rogers Truck Stop) in Lexington.

The City is also part of a consortium bid to purchase biodiesel. This fuel is made locally and reduces particulate and GHG emissions. Experience in the US has been extremely favorable. The City is planning on piloting this alternative fuel.

To further the City's contribution to reduced GHG's and conventional air pollution and reduced dependence of foreign oil, the following activities will be pursued.

CNG Vehicles

- a) Work with NSTAR, MIT and Harvard at locating one or more CNG filling stations within the City of Cambridge.
- b) Work with others within Cambridge to help to leverage a CNG station as soon as possible.
- c) Purchase and use more CNG vehicles.

Electric Vehicles

The City has no desire, based on our recent history, to purchase additional electric vehicles. The City will continue to monitor the technology and available vehicles in the event that reliability and performance improve.

Hybrid Vehicles

Currently there are only two sedan models (Toyota and Honda) available. These will be considered for appropriate uses. The future promises that hybrid versions of pick-up trucks and other classes of vehicles. When this occurs the City will evaluate and determine a policy on the purchase of these types of hybrid vehicles for appropriate uses.

Biodiesel

See above paragraph on the biodiesel implementation plan.

Fuel Efficient (FE) Vehicles

The City is currently implementing this where possible. S-10 vehicles (small sized pick-up truck) are currently being used where appropriate and the use of smaller more fuel efficient engines are also being pursued. This will depend on the application of the vehicle and in some cases this can be done. The pick-up truck purchase options should be as follows: 1) heavy duty vehicle use - 8 cylinder engine; medium duty vehicle use – 6 cylinder engine; light duty vehicle use - 4 cylinder engine).

Improve Fuel Efficiency via Driver Training

The City is looking at the feasibility of implement a driver training program to help improve fuel economy by teaching employees how to drive to conserve fuel.

Enforced Idling Policy

The applicable Department will review and better enforce the current idling policy for all City drivers. This will be implemented through all Departments

Green Fleet Policy

This effort will be coordinated through the Environmental & Transportation Planning Division of the Community Development Department. The concerted effort of DPW, CWD, TPD, Fire and Police will be required to make this a successful program.

We anticipate that the green fleet policy will be developed and implemented over the next 3 years and be updated on an annual basis as technologies change and improve.



24

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

July 29, 2002

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a combined response to Awaiting Report Item Number 02-23, regarding the feasibility of the City purchasing alternative fuel automobiles, received from Lisa Peterson, Commissioner of Public Works, Susan Clippinger, Director of Traffic, Parking & Transportation and Sam Corda, Managing Director of the Water Department.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/dls

S-224

Consent Agenda #24

Awaiting Report Item

Number 02-23, regarding the
feasibility of the City
purchasing alternative fuel
automobiles.

In City Council July 29, 2002

PLACED ON FILE.