



**TOWN OF AMHERST
ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE FIRST FLEET POLICY**

<i>Approval Date:</i>	December 23, 2024
<i>Effective Date:</i>	January 1, 2025
<i>Revisions:</i>	

The Amherst Town Manager has adopted the following policy to govern the replacement of all non-exempt municipal vehicles with zero emissions first fuel efficient vehicles, as defined below.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

In an effort to reduce the Town of Amherst's fuel consumption, energy costs, and carbon emissions, the Town Manager hereby adopts the following policy to govern the replacement and purchase of all non-exempt municipal vehicles with the most sustainable vehicle option, as defined below.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Zero Emission Vehicle First Fleet Policy (ZEV Policy) is to set standards and guidelines for the purchase, operation, and maintenance of the Town's fleet vehicles that will advance the economic, energy, and climate sustainability of municipal operations by achieving long-term reductions in energy costs, energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions.

3. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all divisions and departments of the Town of Amherst. It applies to road-worthy passenger vehicles, pick up and utility trucks, cargo vans, passenger vans, and SUVs. It does not apply to specialized equipment or off-road vehicles.

4. DEFINITIONS – See Appendix A

5. PROCUREMENT

All Town departments shall seek to purchase zero emission vehicles first for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable.

a. Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) First procurement

Vehicle procurement should be prioritized as follows:

1. Battery-electric vehicle (BEV)
2. Plug-in hybrid vehicle (PHEV)
3. Hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) or other alternative fuel vehicle (AFV)
4. Standard vehicle operated by an internal combustion engine fueled by fossil fuels

The fleet policy is Zero Emission Vehicle First means that battery-electric vehicles shall be prioritized when the Town purchases or leases motor vehicles for its municipal operations, followed by plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, then hybrid electric or other alternative fuel vehicle. Beginning in FY26, all light-duty passenger vehicles purchased or leased are required to be BEVs, unless otherwise allowed by this policy.

b. Fuel efficient requirements for standard vehicles

If it is determined that a ZEV does not meet operational needs, the purchased or leased vehicle must be the most fuel-efficient class, drive train, and model available that will fulfill the intended municipal function. When determining the most fuel-efficient vehicle for a given class, the Town will utilize the fuel efficiency limits contained in the most recent guidance for Criteria 4 published by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources' Green Communities Division (<https://www.mass.gov/guides/becoming-a-designated-green-community>).

Information on makes and models of vehicles, including fuel economy comparisons, can be found at: <http://www.fueleconomy.gov> In addition, many vehicles that meet the above criteria can be found on statewide contracts such as VEH98; purchase of Light Duty Vehicles – Passenger Cars, SUVs, Trucks, Vans, SSVs and PPVs,” located in www.commbuys.com.

The EPA maintains a database on vehicle fuel efficiency that is updated periodically throughout the year. As increasing numbers of fuel efficient vehicle models are released, the minimum combined MPG requirements of Criterion 4 will be revised upwards. The Green Communities Division Guidance for Criteria 4 should be checked for updates prior to ordering new vehicles.

c. Exempt vehicles

Vehicles exempt from this policy include off-road vehicles, motorcycles, and heavy-duty vehicles with a gross vehicle weight (GVWR) of more than 8,500 pounds. Examples include fire engines, ambulances, and some public works vehicles.

While exempt vehicles are not required to meet the zero-emission requirements, exempt vehicle purchases should prioritize the most fuel-efficient model available that meet the needs of the department and include fuel-reduction and emissions-reduction technology, such as, anti-idling devices, when available and practical.

Where opportunities exist, particularly if grants and new technologies are or become available, the Town may explore opportunities to pilot electric options for heavy-duty and exempt vehicles.

Where the Town contracts vehicle services, it will seek out companies for competitive bidding that offer the use of electric and/or fuel-efficient vehicles.

d. Evaluation of leasing

If it is determined that an electric vehicle (BEV or PHEV) is not currently available to meet the Town's needs, the Town should consider leasing a standard vehicle to allow flexibility to transition to an electric option if it becomes available during the life-cycle of that vehicle.

6. INVENTORY

The following information shall be included in the vehicle inventory list, which shall be updated on an annual basis and provided to the Green Communities Program: model, make, model year, month and year purchased, vehicle fuel source, VIN, drive system, weight class, exempt or non-exempt, miles per gallon, annual miles driven, total fuel consumption, department, and vehicle function. The Town will review on an annual basis the Vehicle Inventory, along with this policy to plan for new acquisitions as part of planning for the new fiscal year budget.

7. EFFICIENT VEHICLE REPLACEMENT PLAN

In upcoming fiscal years, the Town shall develop a plan, to be incorporated into its capital budget, to replace all vehicles with the electric-first hierarchy as indicated by this policy if available. Said plan will consider life-cycle cost, outline the process by which the Town will replace vehicles, include a plan for electric vehicle supply equipment, and consider opportunities for piloting and deploying vehicle-to-grid technology. Vehicles shall be replaced when they are no longer operable and will not be recycled from one municipal department to another unless the recycled replacement is more efficient than the vehicle it is replacing. In addition, when considering vehicle replacement, the function of the vehicle will be reviewed for potential replacement with a more fuel-efficient vehicle, including a zero-emission non-exempt vehicle.

8. ENFORCEMENT

All inquiries should be directed to the Town Manager. This policy is enforced by the Town Manager and/or their designee(s).