

Condo Smarts

Headline: Electric vehicle charging

Topic: Electric Vehicles

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Dear Tony: How does a strata council manage a request to install charging stations when the alterations to our electrical will exceed \$100,000 and our owners will not fund the cost? Our council are in support of the installation of stations but we may require significant upgrades to support charging stations and the spaces were all originally allocated as limited common property and the owners requesting permission to install the charging stations are the furthest from the electrical services. One of the questions that continues to arise is, what happens after we do this upgrade and more people want charging stations? As an older building, constructed in 2002, our owners are concerned the costs of electrical upgrades will divert many of our planned funds for building renewals. Is it possible to limit the number of stations in our building so we can control costs? Would this be unfair to future owners wanting to purchase an electric car?

Kent M. Vancouver

Dear Kent: The installation of charging stations in parking areas that are common property and limited common property is regulated under the bylaws of your strata corporation and may trigger a requirement for owners' approval at a general meeting. If the alteration is a significant change in the use or appearance of common property, the strata corporation is required to seek the approval of the owners by 3/4 vote at a general meeting. If permission is granted under the bylaws, the strata corporation may impose conditions on the approval. These could include the cost of the installation, cost of changes or upgrades, future cost of maintenance, additional insurance costs if any, what occurs in the event the owner sells their unit and the new buyer does not have an electric vehicle and any other obligations that may arise.

Before a strata corporation considers the installation of charging stations, an electrical audit to establish the capacity for the installation of charging stations, their ideal

location if that is an option), and the type and cost estimates for electrical upgrades should be competed. A legal review of your bylaws, the registered strata plan and the method of how parking allocations were assigned by the developer is also essential.

There are many different variations of parking allocations, assignments and designations, and no single answer fits all. Parking spaces may be common property, permitting the strata corporation to reallocate parking, or they may be common property with leases or licenses assigned by the developer limiting the ability to re-allocate or change. They could also be limited common property created by the developer requiring a unanimous vote to change or part of a strata lot, which is often found in townhouse or bare land strata corporations.

Answer the basic questions first, and your decision making will be much easier.

1. Electrical: Is there capacity for charging stations or do we require upgrades?
2. What are the costs? Who will pay for installation, upgrades and future costs?
3. Will the charging stations be exclusive for an owner or common access?
4. Are there property designations or parking allocations that prevent flexibility with the parking?
5. Do we require a 3 / 4 vote approval of the owners at a general meeting?
6. Do we have capacity for future stations?

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