

# Alert



The **Alert** newsletter provides monthly updates on transportation and air quality planning activities within the Delaware Valley.

July 2024

## Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

### Federally Funded Fast Chargers Now Open in Six States

The Joint Office of Energy and Transportation (Joint Office) recently [announced](#) that the first electric vehicle (EV) charging stations funded by the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program have opened to the public, including one in Pennsylvania. According to the quarterly NEVI update released in May, there are now eight NEVI-funded stations in operation across six states providing a total of 33 direct current fast-charging (DCFC) ports.

While 33 may be a small number compared to the over 42,000 fast-charging ports Joint Office [estimates](#) are already available in the U.S, the recent installation of these chargers is noteworthy for signaling the beginning of a major wave of strategic investment in EV infrastructure. Currently, 36 states have begun soliciting projects for at least their first round of funding while 23 states have begun issuing awards. The Joint Office estimates that those 23 states have already made agreements to install over 550 fast-charging charging stations. Since each station must have at least four ports to be eligible for funding under the NEVI Program, this means that at least 2,200 ports are currently in the pipeline across the country.

The NEVI Program is a \$5 billion initiative established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021 to build out a national network of DC fast chargers along interstates and other highways designated as Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs). For an AFC to be considered “built out,” there must be an eligible charging station within one mile of an exit at most least 50 miles along the corridor program. Eligible chargers must have at least four ports, each capable of simultaneously delivering 150 kilowatts of power as well as meeting requirements for reliability, accessibility, and other criteria. The goal of the NEVI Program is to create a convenient and equitable network of chargers that gives people the confidence to buy and drive EVs, especially in areas where charging opportunities are currently sparse.

The IIJA, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also created the \$2.5 billion Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program that can be used to fund a broader range of projects that might not be eligible for the NEVI Program. For example, projects installing Level 2 chargers or those not on a designated AFC are eligible to compete for CFI funds. The NEVI program also differs from the CFI program in that its funds are distributed to all states via a formula, unlike the CFI Program which is competitive. However, before using NEVI funds each state must have a plan to build out their AFCs approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

Pennsylvania is ahead of most other states, having recently awarded its second round of funding. Pennsylvania also became one of the first states to have a NEVI-funded charger in operation when a four-port station opened at a Pilot Travel Center off Interstate 81 in Pittston this January. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation’s [NEVI Funding Round 1B Eligibility Map](#), there are two AFC gaps in the Pennsylvania portion of the DVRPC region remaining for this round of funding: Interstate 295 between the Pennsylvania Turnpike and the New Jersey state line and Interstate 476 near Quakertown. According to its [approved plan for fiscal year 2024](#), New Jersey intends to issue a statewide contract to build out its AFCs rather than soliciting proposals for individual projects, but has yet to award a contract.



## Save the Date

Wednesday

August 28, 2024

**FHWA Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program Round 2**

Applications Due

For more information visit:  
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cfi/>

Thursday

August 29, 2024

**USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program**

Applications Due

For more information visit:  
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>

# Climate Change

## EPA and DOE announce \$850 Million to Cut Methane Emissions

On June 21, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Energy (DOE) [announced](#) \$850 million in funding for projects that will monitor and reduce methane emissions from the oil and natural gas industry. The program specifically aims to help small operators significantly reduce methane emissions from oil and natural gas operations, accelerate the repair of methane leaks from low-producing wells, improve communities' access to empirical data and participation in monitoring, and enhance the detection and measurement of methane emissions from oil and gas operations. The competitive funding opportunity, which is accepting applications until August 26, is open to a wide range of entities including those from government, the oil and gas industry, and academia.

[According to EPA](#), methane emissions occur at all stages of the natural gas process from production to distribution due to both unintentional leaks and deliberate venting. Methane, in addition to being the primary component of natural gas, is also a greenhouse gas that is significantly more potent than carbon dioxide. The most recent [Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks](#) found that, in 2021, methane emissions accounted for 11.5 percent of all GHG emissions in the United States, resulting in a climate impact equivalent to 793 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. The inventory found the single largest source of methane in the U.S. is enteric fermentation, which is part of the digestive process of certain animals, most notably cattle. Raising livestock is also associated with the fourth largest source of US methane emissions—manure management. Natural gas and petroleum systems represent the second and sixth largest emitters respectively, with landfills coming in third.

The recently announced funding is part of the Methane Emissions Reduction Program established under the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 and compliments other federal initiatives. In December of last year, the EPA [finalized](#) new regulations that are expected to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by nearly 80 percent by 2038. That same month, DOE [announced](#) it had conditionally committed \$350 million to environmental agencies in 14 states to address emissions from low-producing oil and gas wells on nonfederal lands with disproportionately high methane emissions. In that round of funding, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection was allocated over \$44 million, making it the second largest recipient behind the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The EPA also recently strengthened emissions reporting requirements for petroleum and natural gas systems to improve transparency and accountability and has proposed establishing a waste emissions charge for large polluters to incentivize companies to reduce waste in their operations.

# Clean Transportation

## Mercer County Receives \$1.9 Million to Expand Clean and Affordable Transportation in Trenton

On June 27, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) announced that Mercer County will receive \$1.9 million through the Mobility and Transportation Innovation Pilot Program (MATIP) to expand [GoTrenton!](#), a microtransit service that uses electric vehicles to improve access to jobs, healthcare, and other essential services in the state's capital. GoTrenton! [went live](#) in 2023 and has since been using a fleet of efficient, [low-speed](#) electric vans with a top speed of 25 miles per hour, to provide on-demand transportation in Trenton. Currently, for \$2 per ride, riders within the city can hail a ride using an app on their phones. The recent award from NJDOT is expected to enable GoTrenton! to provide lower wait times, no cost services, and add service on Sundays. GoTrenton! is operated by [Circuit](#), a company that has worked with cities and advertising partners to offer similar services in over 40 locations across the country, and was developed with leadership from [Isles, Inc.](#), a Trenton-based community development and environmental organization, with support from state and local partners.

NJDOT also announced that the municipality of Princeton would receive \$105,000 from MATIP to install digital displays to provide real-time information to riders of its municipal bus service.



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