

CASE STUDY BUENA VISTA, GA

PLUG INTO GEORGIA



Over the last few decades, the City of Buena Vista has witnessed a declining population and economic setbacks. Local elected officials and business leaders are now investing in downtown revitalization, hoping to attract visitors and tourism dollars. One strategy they identified was to install public EV charging stations to draw travelers into Buena Vista who could then enjoy local attractions and restaurants while charging their vehicles. With no other public EV charging station within 30 miles, Buena Vista is what the industry calls a “charging desert.” With support

from the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government, city leadership met with community members, stakeholders, utilities and charging station providers to identify the right team and location for the installation. Through collaboration with EnviroSpark, Flint Energies, and the Georgia Power Make Ready program, a Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) station was installed on the Buena Vista town square in September 2024. The public-private collaboration exemplifies how innovative and affordable solutions can meet public charging needs and support downtown vitality.

LESSONS LEARNED

APPOINT A DEDICATED PROJECT MANAGER

Assigning a project champion ensures smooth collaboration, oversight, and guidance through each stage of the installation process, minimizing delays and maintaining focus on project goals.

ADAPTABILITY AND PATIENCE ARE KEY

Projects can shift, and delays happen. Buena Vista demonstrated patience, creativity, innovation, and flexibility in navigating various challenges, including administrative hurdles, funding timelines, permitting delays, infrastructure lead times, selecting chargers and revenue models, and establishing utility connections.

LEVERAGE NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Engage stakeholders early through meetings, presentations, and partnerships. Buena Vista’s collaboration with regional commissions and charging companies unlocked critical funding, support, and innovative solutions.

2-YEAR TIMELINE TO SUCCESS

How Buena Vista, GA Powered Up Its Future: EV Charger Success Story

1

AUGUST 2022: DECISION MADE

City leaders recognized the downtown revitalization opportunity for EV chargers to attract visitors. A decision was made to move forward with the project and meetings were held with stakeholders over the next several months.

2

APRIL 2024: FUNDING SECURED

Through partnerships with utility providers and the charging company over a nearly two-year period, funding was secured to fully support the charger installation and associated infrastructure upgrades. Site planning and decisions around charging equipment were also done during this time.

3

JULY 2024: PERMITS APPROVED

The utility provider and charging company collaborated on the engineering and permitting process to obtain permits over the next few months.

4

SEPTEMBER 2024: INSTALLATION

The Direct Current Fast Charger (DCFC) was officially installed and entered the final checks in the heart of Buena Vista’s downtown.

5

MARCH 2025: OPERATIONAL

The DCFC came online and is providing EV drivers with a reliable charging option in the heart of Buena Vista’s downtown.

\$155K
EXTERNAL INVESTMENT

\$0
COST TO THE COMMUNITY

The UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government provided staff support and facilitated the City of Buena Vista forming public-private partnerships to install the DCFC charger, with the total cost of the project covered by an external investment of \$155,000.

The charger is expected to increase foot traffic to downtown businesses in addition to a 10% revenue share for the City.



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“This might not mean much to a big city, but for us, this is great,” said Mayor Kevin Brown, who noted that it’s been many years since the town lost its largest employer and utility customer, Tyson Foods. “That caused us to kind of pivot and ask how can we get people to come into our community to stop and shop and spend money with our local businesses.”... “We hope people will stop here, charge their vehicles and enjoy the ‘Beautiful View’ of Buena Vista,” said Brown. “We’re so thankful for all the people and companies who made it happen.”

—The Journal, April 2, 2025