

# OTTERSPACE

ELECTRIC VEHICLE

**Wednesday, January 31, 2024**

Wyoming Department of Transportation  
ATTN: Nicholas Gronski  
nicholas.gronski2@wyo.gov

To whom it may concern,

In the following pages, please find our responses to WYDOT RFI 24-060NG, National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program. We are grateful for the opportunity to respond and welcome further discussion and engagement with WYDOT on this important topic.

Please feel free to reach out directly to me with any questions, concerns, or follow-up.

Best regards,

Mike Yin



President and Founder, OtterSpace  
mike@otterspace.us



## Introduction

Contact name: Mike Yin, President and Founder  
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Business name: OtterSpace LLC  
PO Box 13469, Jackson, WY 83002  
Phone number: 307-201-9897

## Technical response

### 1. General

- a. Our primary interest is in developing charging stations in the tourism corridors that serve Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, as well as within the parks themselves. Our current DCFC stations – located in Pinedale, Lander, and Dubois – serve tourists traveling on these routes. We also have a strong partnership with the City of Laramie associated with Level 2 charging stations and an interest in expanding our footprint in Laramie to include DCFC.
- b. There are two key barriers that we see:
  - i. The size of the station, and corresponding size of the investment, needed in order to meet NEVI standards, specifically the requirement that each plug be able to produce 150kW simultaneously. This opens up the likelihood of very large demand charges, as well as increases the costs of infrastructure and associated lead times. There are also more limited options from manufacturers of EVSE that meet this requirement.
  - ii. The requirement to be located along Interstates to receive NEVI funding at this stage, versus having the flexibility to target areas where we know EV traffic to exist at a level that will support a financially viable station (i.e., along tourism routes experiencing increased EV traffic).
- c. Yes, we are very experienced in this area. We operate the following stations, all of which came online in the summer of 2023 and are maintained by our company:
  - i. 120 kW DCFC, Lander, located at the Fremont County Pioneer Museum
  - ii. 200 kW DCFC, Dubois, located at the Dubois Museum
  - iii. 120 kW DCFC, Pinedale, located at public parking in downtown Pinedale
  - iv. 80A L2 charging, Laramie, located at public parking in downtown Laramie
- d. We believe that the existing State of Wyoming NEVI plan did an excellent job of identifying potential locations for charging stations likely to receive regular and critical tourism use. We find this analysis to be accurate and practical about traffic patterns in the state. At the level of site selection, our existing stations reflect public-private partnerships; we are also developing partnerships with private businesses/landowners for the future.



- e. We do not currently have DCFC infrastructure along an AFC. We do, however, operate Level 2 charging stations in partnership with the City of Laramie and would like to expand the footprint of that partnership to include DCFC infrastructure. Funding availability to support projects at this scale will be a key factor determining the timeline of this planning.

## **2. Partnerships and business models**

- f. We would consider a profit-sharing requirement to be a barrier. Additionally, any rules that required us to put projects or project components out to bid for contractors/subcontractors would be a barrier. OtterSpace has established strong working relationships with partner electrical and civil engineering contractors (including an EVITP-certified electrician). These working relationships are a core component of our project development and operations.
- g. We prefer the partnership model of leasing space for a project versus profit sharing. The up-front investment requirements are substantial for DCFC, with extended time frames to projected return. Agreed-upon consistent lease payments provide certainty and allow for better planning and consistent expectations from EVSE operators and site partners.
- h. While we would not rule out site ownership in the future, in general we prefer to lease space for EVSE projects. Our standard contract agreement is for a ten-year term with two five-year renewals.
- i. For all of our projects, we coordinate early and often with utilities to ensure site suitability, identify needed utility-side infrastructure, and design the layout of our charging stations. Site visits with utility personnel (e.g. load estimators) are a key early part of the planning process, and we engage with the utility throughout the site design, development, and station installation process.

## **3. Technical requirements**

- j. We would like to continue deploying EVSE operating at similar levels to the chargers that we already operate, including dual-port DCFC that deliver 120kW-200kW and 80A L2 chargers. We are open to employing higher powered DCFC for promising sites where public funding opportunities would support a higher level of investment than private-only funding would allow.
- k. As noted previously, meeting the 150 kW/plug standard when vehicles are charging simultaneously is difficult. There are fewer options on the market for private businesses to purchase EVSE meeting these standards and it is expensive to address the demand charges that come with this size of installation.
- l. N/A

## **4. Funding**

- m. Our model has been to fund charging stations privately, and this would be our approach for any project cost-share.
- n. The best approach for maximizing private sector investment, from our perspective, is to focus on areas with the most probable substantial return for



investors – tourism corridors and other areas likely to experience heavy EV traffic.

## 5. Operations and Maintenance

- o. Lack of funding in this area could be a barrier.
- p. We already commit to maintaining our sites for the entire lifespan of each project (a minimum of ten years). We do this by having accessible personnel located around the state to address station issues, and through a partnership with EV Connect, our national charging network.
- q. Rurally-focused, regional EV charging businesses will have more success in quickly addressing issues that may negatively influence uptime; companies without in-state personnel will have a harder time deploying people quickly. This is one reason we are proud to be a Wyoming business focused on developing projects in, and for, Wyoming communities. At the level of EV charging networks, friction could arise due to the fact that independent and local operators of DCFC are largely dependent on national charging networks over which they do not necessarily have much control.

## 6. Additional Information

- r. We wish to express our gratitude to WYDOT for their work in developing the state's NEVI plan, which has our support. We agree with and echo your focus on ensuring that Wyoming's NEVI funds can be brought off interstates as quickly as possible. We would also note that communities such as Laramie will benefit from having DCFC infrastructure available and should remain priorities for the state for NEVI funds. We look forward to engaging in this process further and to being part of the solution for providing reliable DCFC infrastructure with a focus on supporting the needs of Wyoming communities.



## SECTION 2 SPECIAL PROVISIONS

### 1. OWNER

All supporting documentation and manuals submitted with this RFI will become property of the State unless requested otherwise by the respondent at the time of submission.

All information provided will be made available to all members of the evaluation team and others as needed. Use of proprietary information is discouraged.

### 2. WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONTACT

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### 3. QUESTIONS

Written questions regarding RFI material shall be submitted into Public Purchase. **Questions will be received in writing until 11:00 A.M. MT, January 3, 2024.** No telephone calls or E-Mail questions will be accepted.

### 4. PREPARATION COST

Costs of developing the information package are entirely the responsibility of the respondent and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by the Wyoming Department of Transportation. The Wyoming Department of Transportation is not liable for any cost incurred by the respondent.

### 5. REFERENCES

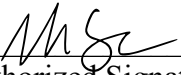
Respondents may provide reference material if it is needed to support the information package. References should reflect similar government projects.

**6. AUTHORIZATION**

By submission of information, the respondent:

Certifies that no attempt has been made, nor will be made, by the respondent to induce any other person or firm to submit information for the purpose of restricting competition.

Certifies the person signing this response is authorized to represent the company and the information and supporting documentation provided in response to this RFI.

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<u>PO Box 13469</u> (Street Address/P.O. Box)	<u>Jackson, WY 83002</u> (City, State & Zip Code)
<u>Michael Yin</u> (Name of Authorized Rep.)	<u></u> (Authorized Signature)
<u>1/30/2023</u> (Date)	<u>mike@otterspace.us</u> (E-Mail Address)

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