

## **Powering West Michigan's Transportation Agenda**

### *Charging Stations for All Electric & Electric Hybrid Vehicles*

Greg Northrup, West Michigan Strategic Alliance

Much has been said about the advent of all electric and electric hybrid vehicles over the past 10 -15 years, but now that reality is here. In West Michigan, the cities of Grand Rapids, Muskegon and Holland are partnering with our utility providers and private sector hosts to get ready for the future. Preparing for this cleaner form of transportation will build on our legacy and reputation as national sustainability leaders. This is an exciting turning point in our automotive history and, we as a region need to adopt strategies which ensure we are ready to be in the forefront of that effort.

Predictions or estimates of electric and hybrid vehicle sales vary, but in a recent quote, D.T.T. Global Manufacturing Industry Group estimated, "...that by 2020, electric vehicles and other "green" cars will represent up to a third of total sales in developed markets and up to 20 percent in urban areas of emerging markets." (This equates to approximately 20 million in worldwide vehicle sales, with 3.6 million in the US.) A key assumption in these sales estimates is the anticipated availability of ample recharging capacity and availability in residences and at various public and commercial establishments.

To show our commitment to "green" cars we have begun the process to provide convenient charging station options across West Michigan. This effort will complement the region's success in becoming a supplier of advanced energy storage (battery) systems, following announcements by Johnson Controls/SAFT (Holland), Compact Power (Holland) and Toda America (Battle Creek). We will actively support and encourage further investments and job creation opportunities in this next generation of vehicles and other applications for advanced energy storage.

After reviewing the potential charging station supplier options, West Michigan Energy, led by the West Michigan Strategic Alliance, has begun working closely with Coulomb Technologies, to rollout the installation of its Leviton's Evr-Green Public Use Charging Stations, networked by ChargePoint America <http://chargepointamerica.com>. Coulomb was awarded a \$15 million grant under the Transportation Electrification Initiative administered by the U.S. Department of Energy. ChargePoint charging stations are available now for installation in the 9 designated regional metropolitan areas of the U.S. One of those regions is Southern Michigan, which stretches from Detroit to Grand Rapids, Holland and Muskegon. The charging stations are free for qualifying locations, if the property owner is willing to pay for the cost of installation.

In support of the ChargePoint America program, three automakers have committed to deliver electric vehicles in the designated U.S. regions: Chevrolet Volt, Ford Transit Connect Electric, Ford Focus Electric, and the Smart for twocar electric drive, manufactured by Mercedes Benz, will be introduced in conjunction with this program. We are reaching out to the West Michigan Auto Dealers to help our regions further understand and advance the options for potential purchasers.

Over the next 30-60 days, we will confirm and finalize the identification of potential sites for up to 70 West Michigan charging stations. They will be located in public areas, such parking decks and government offices, along with potential private sector property owners, including supermarkets and movie theaters. Installations will begin in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2010 and continue into 2011.

If you are interested in receiving more information about this program, please contact Greg Northrup, West Michigan Strategic Alliance, [president@wm-alliance.org](mailto:president@wm-alliance.org) or 616-356-6060.

*West Michigan Energy is public/private partnership, made up of a diverse group of individuals committed to advancing comprehensive solutions designed to meet our region's energy requirements.*