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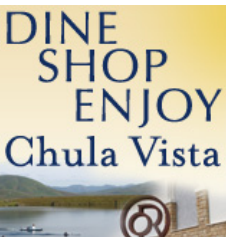
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New collaborative aims to make S.D. leader in electric vehicle readiness

By **JAMES PALEN**, The Daily Transcript
 Monday, January 31, 2011

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With the recent emergence of electric vehicles such as the Nissan Leaf and Chevrolet Volt, San Diego is taking a step toward creating the infrastructure needed to support large volumes of electric cars.

Monday marked the beginning of that path with the announcement of the Smart City San Diego collaborative. An effort between the city, **General Electric**, CleanTech San Diego, **San Diego Gas & Electric** and the University of California, San Diego, Smart City is designed to develop and implement a comprehensive electric vehicle infrastructure plan.

The plan was unveiled by Mayor Jerry Sanders with a morning ceremony at the Birch Aquarium in La Jolla, complete with a row of electric vehicles plugged into GE's WattStation electric vehicle charger.

"These are vehicles we hope will be commercially available in the not-too-distant future," said UCSD Chancellor Marye Anne Fox. "This is not a demonstration. The demonstration's been done before. But it is yet one illustration of how consumer behavior will be altered ... We want to bring electric vehicles to the roads of San Diego, and eventually, mainstream America."

UCSD will play a large role in being the laboratory in which the technology is refined. In his address, Sanders spoke of how UCSD, SDG&E and GE will test the economic and technical feasibility of achieving zero tailpipe emissions in the region. The testing will be done using UCSD's existing solar and fuel cell infrastructure, which generates around 85 percent of the school's electricity needs.

Sanders also said feedback of the process will be taken from a consumer-focus group comprised of UCSD students, faculty and staff offered commercial leases on electric vehicles, using UCSD's planned electric vehicle infrastructure to charge them. Initially, UCSD plans to install 10 of the chargers on its campus to support its new fleet of electric vehicles, which is expected to arrive within the next six months.

In doing their part, SDG&E and GE plan to pilot a vehicle-to-grid demand management program to learn when and where charging will occur and work with electric vehicle owners to better manage charging loads.

CleanTech San Diego, the nonprofit cluster of clean technology companies throughout San Diego County, will help measure the economic impacts of the projects, including job growth and training needs.

"Working together, we will be able to accomplish this faster and more effectively than if these individual organizations work separately," Sanders said. "Widespread consumer adoption of zero-emission, all-electric vehicles relies on a charging infrastructure so that drivers can rely on being able to charge their cars."

An efficient permitting process is also planned between the city and SDG&E, allowing rapid deployment of electric vehicle chargers in locations convenient to the public. As chairman of CleanTech San Diego, Jim Waring said the investment and eventual rollout is part of a larger plan to make the San Diego region the first in the world to figure out how a digitized grid can support sustainability and the innovation economy. Knowledge transfer, he added, is also going to be one of CleanTech's responsibilities within the effort.

"None of these organizations, in terms of their core mission, is focused on outreach, necessarily," Waring said. "So we really want to be the outreach. The goal here is to come up with, if you will, a playbook, so that the city of Cincinnati or London or anywhere can come here and say, 'OK, how do we accommodate 200,000 electric vehicles in our metropolitan area?'"

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