
Condo Smarts

Headline: Electric Vehicle Charging in Complex Properties

Topic: Electric Vehicles

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Written by: Tony Gioventu

Dear Tony: Our strata corporation is one of 5 that shares a common parking garage. The garage is part of the property of the 1st strata corporation as their common property, but each strata corporation has an easement to access the parking garage and assigned one space per strata lot. Our strata corporation has voted to permit charging stations but 3 of the 5 including the 1st strata corporation have voted against charging stations. Is there any strategy to changing the requirement for charging stations?

Jeremy W.

Dear Jeremy: There are hundreds of variations of property ownership, allocation and easements for parking across BC. Owners in Bare Land or Townhouse style strata corporations with individual garages, generally have the easiest solutions as they can install charging stations within their garages and connect them to their electrical service; however, check the strata bylaws first to ensure you don't require permission for the alterations.

Strata corporations with a single use garage that is common or limited common property, will be required to administer their bylaws when considering the installation of charging stations. Strata corporations with shared use parking or easements over parking that is part of an Air Space Parcel will be subject to the terms and conditions of the easement, the parking allocations, and the limitations on alterations to the electrical services, installation of a charging station, user fees to recover the cost of operations and electric fees, and a negotiation with the principle owner of the parking areas for permission to install and any agreements for liability of costs and operations.

The best option, which creates eligibility for grants and financial support from various levels of government and

utility providers, is the electrification and management of your complete parking garage. The best practice is to start with a capacity study to determine the total anticipated demand for electrical, including heat pump installations and make up air conversions, hot water conversions, LED upgrades for common areas to reduce demand, and anticipated vehicle charging and demand management. Your property may require electrical upgrades before you proceed.

Consumers can anticipate local and provincial governments to introduce legislation to compel multi family properties to permit installation or upgrades for charging stations, and conversions for components such as gas fired hot water boilers to electric in the near future. Complicated strata corporations with shared users and easements will be faced with greater challenges as they are bound by easements and covenants that may not easily grant conversions with consent and amendment to easements. If you are in a complicated strata corporation, start with obtaining a complete copy of the shared use agreement, easement or covenant. Meet with your strata council and review options for installations. This may require legal support to interpret the agreements and negotiate with the principal holder of the property.