

INNOVATION BEAT

Itselectric startup building curbside EV chargers in Boston

By [Aaron Pressman](#) Globe Staff, Updated July 30, 2024, 6 minutes ago



EV charging startup Itselectric will be installing dozens of its silver, rectangular EV charging posts around Boston. ZACK DEZON

Nathan King, chief executive of EV charging startup Itselectric, spent a rainy day in front of City Hall last week showing off his company's low-cost solution.

King's New York-based company was [one of two chosen by the city in February](#) to install dozens of new curbside connections for residents who don't have access to EV charging at home. It's a critical need in a city where most residents park on the street or don't have access to a charger in their apartment parking garage.

The Brooklynite and his team set up a tent alongside other startups helping with the transition to cleaner energy use as part of Mayor Michelle Wu's "Climate Tech in the City" event.

Visitors got to see one of Itselectric's rectangular silver charging posts, about three feet high, which can be placed curbside and connected to the electric power of a nearby building instead of needing their own utility hookup, reducing costs and speeding installation. Itselectric, not the city, will pay for the installations and plans to make money by charging EV drivers (with some of the revenue shared with the owner of the connected building).

The company and the city are working together to pick sites to install the charging posts, King said. "We have 25 in boxes," he said. "I hope to have them all in by year end. I think that's doable."

Site selection will be critical to ensure all residents across the city have access to charging — a Globe survey of Boston-area census tracts found that [the city has fewer EV chargers in areas with a higher proportion of Black population](#).

Unlike most EV chargers, the posts don't come with a connected charging cable. Drivers have to obtain a cable (free of charge) from Itselectric. "It's not for people visiting a neighborhood or driving through," King said. "It's for someone who already parks on that block."

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Nathan King (right), chief executive of EV charging company Itselectric, and Michael Re (left), senior project manager, came to Boston to attend a city-sponsored event about climate technology. Boston chose Itselectric to be one of two vendors installing

charging stations all around the city. AARON PRESSMAN/GLOBE STAFF

Meanwhile, in the state's effort to add high-speed EV chargers along major highways, one of the state's three contractors, engineering firm Weston & Sampson, has added an experienced partner to its team. [Rivermoor Energy](#), founded in 2008, specializes in installing solar power, large batteries, and EV charging stations.

Rivermoor has already installed EV chargers around the state, including in a parking lot in Belmont Center and at town facilities around Longmeadow.

Massachusetts is slated to get about \$60 million in federal funds under the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure program to build charging stations at least every 50 miles along major highways. Some states already have NEVI-funded stations running, but [Massachusetts is moving slower](#) and asking its contractors to propose suitable sites.

Rivermoor and Weston & Sampson say they have already been discussing possible sites with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, which is overseeing the state's NEVI effort. The two firms have worked in the past on projects for corporations, universities, hospitals, and government agencies around the state and could use those relationships to site new EV stations, John Tourtelotte, founder and managing director at Rivermoor, said.

"We can look at the map strategically and think about ... where would a driver really need to have a charge if they're going on a longer trip," Tourtelotte said.

Still, the state has not made a final determination about sites yet, and building fast charging stations can take anywhere from a few months to more than a year.

"If a site is highly feasible, we're talking about a period of several months," Tourtelotte said. "We expect to have some major announcements in this year."

"Within a few months, we expect to hopefully start construction on the first round of sites," added Johanna Hall, senior team leader at Weston & Sampson.

A key factor will be choosing sites that are well lit and safe — unlike some current EV charging stations located at the back of dark and empty parking lots, Hall said.

“We’re looking for active sites that aren’t in the middle of a deserted parking lot where no one ever goes,” she said “We want people to feel safe where they go to charge. We are also looking for site amenities, like restaurants, or coffee shops, or parks.”

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