

St. Lucie West to get electric car charging station

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ST. LUCIE WEST — As the globe inches toward becoming greener with cleaner energy, Port St. Lucie is right on the trend's heels. As part of the city's efforts to create a cleaner environment and foster a new business relationships, Mayor JoAnn Faiella announced a new partnership with Tesla Motors Inc. to install the Treasure Coast's first Tesla supercharging station for electric vehicles in St. Lucie West.

"The city's central location and highway access make it a natural stopping point for Florida's most heavily populated areas," Faiella said during a press conference last week. "As the electric vehicle market grows, people will learn about our city as they search for places to charge their vehicles."

"If our community does the right thing, news will spread throughout social media that Port St. Lucie is a great place to make a stop-over and businesses and tourists will continue to discover new opportunities here."

The charging station will have connections for eight cars in existing parking spaces in the Town Center Plaza where Starbucks, Five Guys and Moe's Southwestern Grill are located just off I-95 and St. Lucie West Boulevard.

The company filed a permit application and construction plans with the city on May 31, which are being reviewed by the building department, Faiella said. City officials aren't sure how long the process will take.

Faiella, who recruited the company, said Tesla's presence will act as an economic booster.

"People who stop here to recharge will have time to spend at our local businesses and we want them to feel welcomed," she said.

The charging station will also improve the local air and perpetuate the city's goal to create a cleaner environment, city officials said in a press release.

"In recent years, the city has increased its commitment to reduce environmental impacts and conserve natural resources," the release said. "Initiatives include the installation of a solar power system



Photo courtesy of Tesla Motors

A Tesla charging station will have connections for eight cars in existing parking spaces in the Town Center Plaza in St. Lucie West

at the Civic Center in 2011 and upgrades to lighting, air conditioning and other electrical appliances throughout city buildings this past year."

"The improvements are estimated to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by the equivalent of 774 cars a year, and are one reason why the city was rated by the American Lung Association as having the fifth cleanest air in the country in 2012." The station will also reduce charging time for consumers who drive Tesla manufactured cars, cutting charging time from six to eight hours at dealerships to three to four, Faiella said.

The California-based company has galleries in Dania Beach, Dadeland and Miami Beach with service stations in Dania Beach and Tampa. The largest Tesla battery supplies 300 miles of range at 55 mph. According to the automaker's website, Tesla drivers spend an average of \$934 on fuel costs, compared to \$5,182, the average cost of fuel for a premium sedan.

For more information on Tesla Motor Inc., visit www.teslamotors.com