



Community Transportation Needs Assessment Report: Winsted, CT

Community-Driven Transportation Plans for the Northeast

Executive Summary

Through engagement with the Town of Winsted, Live Green Connecticut collected fifty-eight surveys gathering individuals' feedback on alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) adoption in Winsted. The survey results identified barriers to AFV adoption and gave a consensus of the knowledge and feelings towards AFVs in Winsted. The first Winsted Community Forum was held in October 2024. The goal of this forum was to review the results of the survey data and identify key barriers to AFV adoption based on community discussion. The high priority barriers in Winsted identified at the first forum were range anxiety, location constraints, maintenance, and cost. The second Winsted Community Forum was focused on finding actionable solutions to those previously identified barriers. The second Winsted Community Forum was held on April 2nd, from 10:30am to 12:00pm. There were twenty-two registries which included the Town Manager, Mayor, Selectwomen, business owners, and community members in Winsted. At the second forum, we addressed the four main barriers. We discussed the CHEAPR Program with Paul Farrell from Connecticut DEEP, how to avoid range anxiety, and the locations of surrounding chargers in other towns. The next step is to plan a spring event that highlights the benefits of a Ride and Share Program.

High Priority Action Items Identified

The high priority action items identified are:

1. Ride and Share Program
2. Spring/summer community event
3. Alternative fuel vehicle education
4. Dealership collaboration Ride and Drive

Project Background

The Community-Driven Transportation Plans for the Northeast project began in Winsted in April 2024 with the initial survey distribution. Winsted is a small community, with just under 7,000 people. Winsted is also a rural location without access to AFV charging stations. The project is intended to educate community members who have little knowledge of AFVs, identify Winsted stakeholders, identify key barriers to AFV adoption, and find actionable solutions to those barriers. There were fifty-eight surveys distributed. This survey data was then analyzed before the first community forum.

After the survey results were collected, the first Winsted Community Forum was held on October 30th, 2024. At this community forum, we identified key barriers to AFV adoption. The second Winsted Community Forum was held on April 2nd.

Summary of Engagement

1. Surveys

From April 2024 to July 2024, we began the process and distribution of surveys to Winsted residents. The survey asked participants their views on transportation and AFV ownership. Fifty-eight community members responded to the survey during this time. The surveys were distributed to a variety of Winsted community members including local business owners, students from Connecticut State Community College, municipal leaders, and residents. The survey asked fifteen questions total. Participants were then split into three categories for analysis based on their responses to the interest of AFVs in Winsted: the enthusiasts, the undecided, and the uninterested. The enthusiasts are eager to buy an alternative fuel vehicle because they have already done their own research and have found incentives for the adoption of AFV. The undecided are people that have researched AFVs but are unsure because of the barriers identified. Finally, the uninterested are people who show extremely low interest in AFVs. The survey results were used to identify barriers to AFV adoption and spark conversation at the first Winsted Community Forum.

2. Community Forums

The first Winsted Community Forum was held on October 30th at Little Red Barn Brewery in Winsted and was attended by multiple municipal leaders. At the forum, we analyzed the survey data to identify barriers to AFV adoption. After community discussion, the four high priority barriers were identified as range anxiety, location constraints, maintenance, and cost. We also gained support for this project while making contacts for future meetings and projects.

The second Winsted Community Forum was held on April 2nd from 10:30am to 12:00pm at the American Museum of Tort Law. This forum presented solutions to the previously identified barriers. The CHEAPR Program was explained by Paul Farrell to combat the cost barrier. Range anxiety was addressed with a presentation on the Coast-to-Coast AFV Road Trip, and surrounding charger locations were highlighted. A news article was also written in advance of the event.

Main Barriers Identified

The main barriers identified in Winsted are range anxiety, sense of charger isolation in a rural area, charger efficiency/maintenance, and pricing. Currently there are very few AFV chargers in rural areas. There is one charger in Winsted. However, there are five chargers just 15 minutes away in the town over. After reviewing the survey results, it was evident that many Winsted residents have had little to no previous AFV education. Cost of alternative fuel vehicles was also a main barrier. Finally, one of the primary barriers identified after both the survey collection and the community forums is range anxiety. Winsted is in a rural area adjacent to many rural towns. The second Winsted Community forum will focus on finding solutions to those barriers.

Solutions Identified

The second Winsted Community Forum on April 2nd addressed the four main barriers in the Town of Winsted. Cost was focused on through Paul Farrell's presentation of the CHEAPR Program. Daphne Dixon presented on range anxiety, sharing her experience driving cross-country in an AFV. Finally, Lydia Bird shared the locations of chargers in surrounding areas that are easy and accessible to use.

Community Forum Feedback

Two attendees said they would be more likely to drive an AFV after attending the forum and receiving additional information. Everyone else stayed with their initial opinion. The next steps would be to plan a summer/spring ride and drive event for the community and to discuss what an AFV Car Share Program would look like and present the benefits to the community.

Acknowledgment and Disclaimer

This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Vehicle Technologies Office (VTO) under the Award Number DE-EE0010617.

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