



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Maui Electric moves forward to operate EV fast-charging network** *New rates to be set to encourage midday charging*

**KAHULUI, April 1, 2019** – In partnership with the County of Maui, Maui Economic Development Board (MEDB), Ulupono Initiative, Blue Planet Foundation and Hitachi, Maui Electric will assume ownership and operation of the existing electric vehicle fast-charging network on Maui, under an arrangement approved last week by the Hawai'i Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

As the company works on the transition, it will propose revised charging rates to provide an incentive to EV drivers to charge during midday hours when less-expensive solar energy is abundant.

The PUC approved Maui Electric's proposal to maintain the EV charging infrastructure at eight existing sites on Maui. MEDB currently owns the existing fast-charging network that supports more than 300 of the approximately 1,000 EV owners on the island through its EVohana membership program, which was established through the JUMPSmartMaui demonstration project. The project – a cooperative venture between Japan, the State of Hawai'i, County of Maui, MEDB, Hitachi and Maui Electric – operated from 2011 to 2017 to exhibit smart grid technologies that could enable the efficient use of renewable energy on an island grid.

At the conclusion of the project, ownership of the charging assets was transferred to MEDB to continue providing fast-charging options to EV owners. MEDB partnered with Hitachi to create a new program EVohana, with Hitachi continuing to operate and maintain the assets until March 31, 2019.

The County of Maui, MEDB, Ulupono Initiative and Blue Planet Foundation then formed a community consortium to develop a new long-term management model with Maui Electric. Without a new owner and operator, the charging infrastructure and program would have been discontinued. The consortium agreed that having Maui Electric sustain the charging network would be most beneficial to current and future users and play an important role in integrating more renewable energy.

"With the high rate of EV adoption on Maui, we recognized that maintaining a publicly available fast-charging network was important," said Sharon Suzuki, president of Maui County and Hawai'i Island Utilities. "Having an established charging network helps to reduce range anxiety, provides charging options for EV drivers who don't have the ability to install a charger at home and encourages more people to make the switch to EVs."

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