The transportation sector is now the single-largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. More than 90 percent of the fuel currently used for transportation is petroleum-based. In 2020, only around 1 percent of total transportation sector energy use came from electricity, and nearly all of that was in mass transit systems. Of the 250 million cars, light-duty trucks, and SUVs currently on the road, fewer than 1 percent are electric. In response to the climate imperative and volatile fuel prices, however, momentum is building for the transition to electric vehicles (EVs). By 2050, industry experts anticipate that around half of the cars on the road will be electric.

Going from less than 1 percent to 50 percent EVs within a single generation represents a great challenge—and a great opportunity. The transition to an electrified transport system will provide significant economic, environmental, and public health benefits. As public enthusiasm for EVs continues to grow and investments in transportation electrification ramp up, more widespread adoption will create new winners in the new energy economy.

Wilson Sonsini has the knowledge and background to assist our clients in this important, burgeoning transition. We are spearheading work for clients in all sectors of the transportation electrification ecosystem that are designing and building tomorrow’s EV infrastructure solutions. From EV manufacturers and providers, to companies that have patented charging infrastructure and software, to those that are simply looking to leverage the synergies between EV charging services and their current business models, we represent a range of clients investing in the electrification of the transportation system. Our attorneys bring together the cross-disciplinary expertise, including commercial and regulatory expertise, needed to enable clients’ new business models and project finance structures in the quickly evolving EV industry.

Industry-Defining Electrification Deals
Our attorneys have represented some of the leading companies advancing transportation electrification, from EV manufacturers to software providers to infrastructure financiers. Wilson Sonsini has been at the forefront of the industry, advising clients on cutting-edge transactions supporting electrification of light-duty passenger vehicles, medium- and heavy-duty trucks, and buses. For instance, we represented Highland Electric in its 2021 agreement with Montgomery County Public Schools for the electrification of their school bus fleet.

We also have a track record of putting together unique and novel partnerships and joint ventures in the space, as illustrated by our representation of ChargePoint in developing its first-of-its-kind partnership agreement with Goldman Sachs Renewable Power, allowing ChargePoint’s customers to take advantage of world-class third-party financing solutions.

**EV Charging Provider Representation**

Wilson Sonsini also helps clients outside of the electric vehicle space incorporate EV charging into their portfolio of services. The firm has extensive experience representing clients in the real estate, energy, and technology sectors in leveraging the synergies between EV charging and those clients’ existing business models. Once our clients have successfully incorporated EV charging into their business model, we assist them with the financing of such projects under well-established project finance paradigms.

For example, we have counseled EV charging clients that include REI Cooperative and Prologis on the implementation of electric vehicle sleeting and service structures, under the terms of which our clients purchase hardware and software products, as well as operations and maintenance and engineering, procurement, and construction services from third-party EV charging providers.

**Expertise at Each Phase of the EV Business Life Cycle**

We don’t just make it possible for our clients to thrive in the existing transportation electrification framework. Where current business models and finance paradigms fall short of the new EV reality, we use a multi-disciplinary approach from across the firm to create new models and novel finance structures. Wilson Sonsini is frequently involved in first-of-their-kind transactions and has developed innovative financing structures that now serve as models for EV charging and other energy transition projects.

Our attorneys structure, draft, and negotiate commercial agreements to enable new business models, products, and services, including hardware procurement and software/SaaS license agreements, development agreements, contract manufacturing and supply agreements, and customer agreements. Our privacy and cybersecurity practice identifies and resolves data and cybersecurity issues implicated in our clients’ offerings. In addition, our patents and innovations practice helps clients protect their inventions so that they can be monetized.