

COMMUNITY E-BIKE INCENTIVE PILOT PROGRAM



In 2021, the District of Saanich launched a Community E-bike Incentive Pilot Program. The program:

- Incentivized e-bikes - an emerging low carbon e-mobility technology.
- Removed barriers to e-bike adoption, including specific help for mid-to-low-income households.
- Addressed two key priority issues in our community: affordability and the climate emergency.
- Collaborated with researchers to collect high quality data on how e-bikes impact our transportation behaviours and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Quick facts on the pilot:

- High demand program that quickly delivered over 380 e-bike incentives to residents.
- Designed with community partners, in-depth engagement, and a detailed feasibility study.
- Embedded equity throughout program design and delivery.
- Generated many inquiries from local governments and the Province.

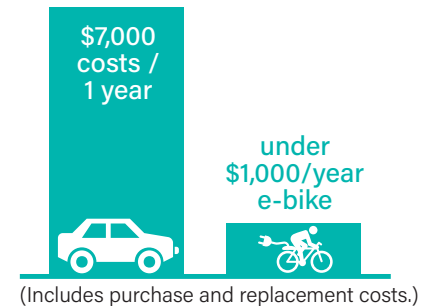
E-bikes go the distance



Research shows the average e-bike trip distance in other communities is 6.1 km. In Saanich, the average trip length by regular bike is 3.3 km, and by car is 5.3 km. E-bikes can replace typical car trips more easily than regular bikes, and therefore can reduce more GHG emissions.

E-bikes are an affordable climate-friendly transportation option

- An average motor vehicle costs over \$7,000 to own and operate a year.
- A typical e-bike costs less than \$1,000 to own and operate a year.
- If used to replace vehicle ownership, an e-bike pays for itself in the first few months of ownership, and delivers thousands of dollars of savings to each household every year.



E-bike incentives can power up climate action

- The biggest barrier to e-bike ownership in Saanich is upfront cost.
- Local stakeholders and industry support low-barrier incentives for e-bikes (i.e. that do not require scrapping a vehicle to get the incentive).
- An incentive approach was selected rather than an e-bike share system as being more likely to result in vehicle substitution in our rural/suburban community.
- Pilot participants in focus groups reported that the e-bike incentive was frequently the first climate incentive program they had ever accessed.



For more information, contact sustainability@saanich.ca

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Advancing knowledge through action

The District partnered with the University of British Columbia to integrate a study in the incentive program to evaluate:

- How incentives influence uptake of e-bikes.
- Trip substitution by e-bike trips (i.e. are e-bikes replacing walking, cycling, transit, personal vehicle trips, or resulting in new leisure trips).
- GHG emission reductions from trip substitution.
- Changes in physical activity levels for personal transportation.
- Transportation affordability impacts for households.
- Equity in accessing program across households of different incomes.
- Lessons learned to share with other jurisdictions.



Initial findings from the UBC study show that:

- The incentive program motivated people to purchase e-bikes who would not otherwise have purchased them.
- People used their e-bikes regularly for commutes to work, school, and errands.
- E-bike riders increased cycling more than those who purchased conventional bikes.
- E-bikes are being used to replace vehicle trips and do so at a higher rate than the conventional bike control group in the study.



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