

E-bikes (and e-cars) for A-town

The advent of COVID has resulted in all sorts of surprises. One of them is the increase in bike ridership. As residents seek activities that are low risk for disease transmission, more people are choosing to bike. The uptick in biking may also be due to the slower lifestyle we have all been forced to adopt. Biking is a lot more feasible if you don't need to take the kids to soccer and piano lessons, get to the office on time, and stop at the grocery store along the way. As we work and learn from home, this slower pace has allowed many Ashland residents to get out of their cars and onto their bikes.

In order to encourage even more folks to get out of their cars, the City of Ashland is offering a \$300 incentive for the purchase of an electric bike at any participating Ashland bike shop. Ashland Electric Utility customers can apply for the incentive and receive a voucher from the bike shop when they purchase a new e-bike. Only 50 vouchers will be distributed over the coming year.

The City is also offering new incentives for purchasing electric cars. The incentives support Ashland's Climate and Energy Action Plan goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a focus on social and economic equity. As we move away from polluting fossil fuels and adopt cleaner technologies, these technologies remain financially out-of-reach for many residents. The new \$1,500 incentive applies to the purchase of a used or new electric car priced less than \$30,000. It is intended to spur the used and lower priced electric car market for lower income residents.

Some of the more affordable electric cars include the Nissan Leaf, Chevy Bolt, Kia Soul EV, and Volkswagen e-Golf. These cars may not be eligible for the incentive when purchased new (unless you get a fantastic deal), but they are increasingly available on the used car market. When you factor in the savings on gas and oil changes, a used electric vehicle can pay for itself in just a few years' time. Plus, they are incredibly quick and nimble on Ashland's steep streets. So check out an EV and apply for your incentive on the City's Electric Vehicle website at <https://www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=17510>.