





MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Jackie A. Sargent, General Manager, Austin Energy 
Richard Mendoza, Interim Director, Austin Transportation 

DATE: November 9th, 2022

SUBJECT: Staff Response to Resolution 20220609-059 to Strengthen the City Incentives for E-Bike Purchases

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide response to [Resolution 20220609-059](#) regarding “action to accelerate adoption of electric bicycle (e-bike) ownership, access, and usage by Austin residents.”

We believe the actions outlined below are bold and will have a significant impact to accelerate e-bike ownership and access. Our comprehensive strategy aligns well with the council resolution and is categorized by financial incentives, outreach, regional leadership, e-bike share, and multifamily support.

Financial Incentives

To help make e-bike ownership more affordable, Austin Energy will be doubling “across the board” existing e-bike rebates, effective Jan 1, 2023. In addition, we are announcing a limited pilot program for Customer Assistance Program participants administered by Austin Energy (AE) but jointly funded between AE and Austin Transportation Department (ATD).

Purchased through local, Austin Energy participating e-bike dealerships	Previous AE Rebate	New AE Customer Rebate	Pilot AE+ATD CAP* Customer Rebate
Individual purchase \$500-\$999/unit	\$100	\$200	\$300
Individual purchase \$1,000-\$1,999/unit	\$200	\$400	\$700
Individual purchase \$2,000+/unit	\$300	\$600	\$1300
Fleet purchase \$500-\$999/unit	\$200	\$400	N/A
Fleet purchase \$1,000-\$1,999/unit	\$300	\$600	N/A
Fleet purchase \$2,000+/unit	\$400	\$800	N/A

**Customer Assistance Program (CAP) - Utility Bill Discounts are to support residents below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level or who already participates in certain state, federal, or local assistance programs to include Medicaid, SNAP, and Veteran’s Affairs Supportive Housing.*

Funding for the new CAP pilot rebate program is provided as a 50/50 split between Austin Energy (AE) Energy Efficiency Services Fund, collected as part of the Community Benefits Charge, and Austin Transportation Department (ATD), not to exceed a total program budget of \$300,000.

Rebate eligibility includes qualifying electric bike, cargo bike, scooter, moped, motorcycle, or other electric two or three-wheel vehicles. Online sales are supported if purchased through a participating AE e-bike dealership.

Additionally, we will clarify in program eligibility requirements that Austin Energy allows, with proof of address, a member of a household that receives electricity from Austin Energy to be eligible to apply for and receive the rebate. This is regardless of whether that member is the named Austin Energy account holder for the household. Household rebate participation caps still apply.

Outreach

Another major driver of adoption is outreach and engagement of our residents. As such, Austin Energy will continue to sponsor and participate in community outreach citywide to include the Eastern Crescent. This outreach will increase opportunities to test-ride e-bikes, improve awareness of financial resources for e-bike usage, and share information on the MetroBike system and the City's bike infrastructure network.

Austin Energy is a major sponsor in what is expected to be the nation's largest EV/E-Bike ride and drive event scheduled at Circuit of the Americas November 11-13, 2022. Last year, attendance was over 21,000 with 13,371 e-bike/scooter demo rides. As part of our sponsorship and collaboration with the event producers, we have provided a ticket discount to Austin Energy customers and all City of Austin employees.

Regional Leadership

Austin Energy will collaborate with non-Austin Energy electricity providers that serve Austin residents with the goal of encouraging their own e-bike incentive programs. Work is underway in this regard with a recently convened Texas Public Power Corridor (TxPPC) EV working group, to include all modes of transportation electrification. Austin Energy's General Manager personally serves as the Executive Chair of this working group.

We will also continue to work with local, regional, and national partners to advance multi-modal electrification to include Texas Electric Transportation Retailers Association (TxETRA), BikeTexas, Housing Authority City of Austin (HACA), CapMetro, Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), financial institutions, and more.

E-bike Share

Austin Energy is working closely with the CapMetro MetroBike program and the Austin Transportation Department in offering e-bike fleet incentives. We also will help to identify infrastructure needs with a greater emphasis in areas that have historically under-developed transportation infrastructure, such as low-income communities and communities of color.

Multifamily Support

Austin Energy is working with affordable housing and other multifamily developments to bring charging infrastructure and e-bikes to these communities. For example, a current public-private partnership/pilot is underway with Chestnut Neighborhood Revitalization Corp, Mod Bikes, and Austin Energy. Austin Energy and Austin Transportation will partner to promote the use-case for electric cargo bikes with these communities

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have heard Council's call to action and believe this comprehensive approach is a solid roadmap to move the needle in Austin's shift to more transit choice, specifically e-bikes with an equity lens. We will monitor all initiatives, and with community and stakeholder feedback adjust programs accordingly with a goal to improve participation and efficacy.