

# E-Bike Purchase/Subsidy Program

The purpose of an e-bike subsidy program is to offer a financial incentive for increasing the use of electric bicycles by subsidizing the purchase or bike-share costs of the bicycles. Increasing ownership or availability of e-bikes is one component of Transportation Demand Management to encourage more non-automobile travel in San Mateo County.



## What is an e-bike?

Electric bicycles (“e-bikes”) are motorized bicycles with an integrated electric motor using rechargeable batteries to assist with propulsion. E-bikes are categorized in one of three classes based on the maximum speed and whether it has a throttle. All types retain the ability for the rider to pedal and are not electric motorcycles or mopeds.



|              | Class 1 | Class 2 | Class 3 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Pedal Assist | ✓       | ✓       | ✓       |
| Throttle     |         | ✓       |         |
| Max Speed    | 20 mph  | 20 mph  | 28 mph  |

## Who is Eligible?

There are different options for determining a programs’ eligibility, such as:

- Open to all residents** – no validation needed.
- Residents of certain neighborhoods** (e.g. Equity Priority Areas).
- Commuters** – a commitment letter to use the e-bike for commuting purposes a certain number of days a week.
- Low-income residents** – proof of enrollment in a EBT program or other social service program, tax returns.
- School-age children** – may be linked to safe routes to school programs.

## Additional State and Local Support (for Ownership)

\$10M California e-bike subsidy program available starting July 2022 for low-income Californians. The Electric Bicycle Incentive Program will be administered by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Program details are still under development as of March 2022.



California Clean Cars 4 All program, through the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) offers incentives up to \$7500 for low-income people to replace their older, polluting vehicles with electric vehicles, including e-bikes.



Peninsula Clean Energy is San Mateo County’s electricity provider. A sponsor could partner with PCE for administering an e-bike subsidy. The program and details can be viewed here:



<https://www.peninsulacleanenergy.com/ebikes/>

### E-bike Subsidy Example: Bike Share

Through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Bike Share Capitol Program, a fleet of 300 e-bikes will be distributed along at SMART (Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit) stations and at popular locations in cities along the corridor through the SMART Rail + Bike Share in Marin and Sonoma County grant. If the program is popular with commuters, there is an option to add 50 more e-bikes.

More information [here](#).



### E-bike Subsidy Example: Ownership

In Pueblo County, Colorado, the county, in partnership with the Colorado Energy Office, purchased 42 e-bikes for low-income essential workers.

The goal of the program is for the e-bikes to act as reliable, consistent transportation for working people who may not be able to afford a car or who cannot rely on the city's public transportation.

More information [here](#).



### E-bike Subsidy Example: Loan Library

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) launched a program in 2021 that would allow residents or workers in the County to sign up for an e-bike demo called the "EZ Bike Project".

A variety of e-bikes are made available for reservation for up to 6 days so users can experience what it would be like to make an e-bike part of their daily travel.

More information [here](#).



## Distribution Models (for Ownership)

There are several options for distributing e-bikes to program participants. Each option relies on a different administrative model that agencies should take into consideration.

- 1. Lower Administration Effort - Agency purchase:** The sponsoring agency eligible program participants to sign-up and purchases e-bikes in bulk directly from a local bicycle shop (preferable) and distributes the e-bikes to eligible program participants or the bike shop can have approved participants pick up the bikes directly, when available. Program rules can pre-set which e-bike models are eligible for purchase in the program.
- 2. Higher Administration Effort - Participant purchase:** The sponsoring agency issues rebates to program participants who purchase pre-selected eligible e-bike models, preferably from local bicycle shops. This model works when an agency may cover only a portion of the e-bike cost. Rebates from the agency can be in the form of reimbursement checks, gift cards, or other methods that would need to be tracked by the agency.



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