



E-bike makes Vancouver commute fun, easy and inexpensive

E-bike enthusiast and advocate Colin Chan is the Regional Leader of Sustainable Clinical Services at Vancouver Coastal Health and proudly owns and rides a RadPower RadRunner electric utility bike. Chan purchased his electric device at the start of the pandemic for \$2,000 and has since then used his e-bike as a reliable form of transit; taking it to work, running errands, and even spending quality time with his primary-school daughter who can easily and safely sit on the rear seat of the bike.

Benefits & Drawbacks

Chan has found that his e-bike effectively makes his hilly commute less exertive. Unlike a traditional bike, this allows him to comfortably wear his work clothes during his commute and does not require a shower or change of clothes at the end of his 20-kilometre ride.

"I had long been a regular bike commuter (non-electric)," says Chan. "But once I tried taking the e-bike to work, I realized how much easier it was going to be. I often still ride my non-electric bike, but on days when I am time-restricted, or just feel a bit low-energy, it's a great option to have for commutes."

Not only is the e-bike comfortable, Chan also finds it provides a more enjoyable commute by allowing him to ride through parks and quiet residential neighbourhoods. Like many individuals, he prefers this to being stuck sitting in a car during rush hour, which also adds more time to his commute when compared to riding his e-bike. In addition, Chan has found his e-bike to be very cost-efficient estimating that every day he commutes to work he saves \$9 in transit fare. For a full week of e-bike commuting he saves \$45.

Additionally, if he were a car commuter, he would save an additional \$5 in fuel and \$12 in parking a day, or \$85 a week.

Chan's main complaint about the e-bike is the weight of the device, battery, and lock, as well as the fear of theft. His bike weighs approximately 60 pounds (27 kilograms), making it difficult to put on a bike rack or carry up/down stairs. Luckily, he is able to store his bike in an access-controlled bike locker at his work. However, he still uses two different locks for added security against theft.

With my e-bike I avoid the frustrating, expensive and time-consuming automobile commuter experience. I enjoy fresh air, exercise and get to ride through parks and quiet residential areas. Awesome!

Future Directions

Looking to the future, Chan says cities could better support electric micro-mobility users by providing a comprehensive network of commuting paths that avoid heavy car traffic. Additionally, better support from workplaces would include taking bike





Colin Chan and his daughter taking a ride on Chan's RadPower RadRunner electric utility bike.

parking as seriously as car parking by creating more accessible and secure parking spaces with designated charging areas, providing workers with "peace-of-mind" knowing that their expensive devices will stay safe while they are at work.

Chan also agrees that electric micro-mobility should be more accessible, citing the huge interest in e-bike rebate programs as a reason for creating affordable e-bike options.

About Us: The Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care is Canada's premier green health care resource network and is leading the evolution of green in Canada's health sector as a national voice and catalyst for environmental change. Collaboratively, we strive to reduce health care's ecological impact from compassionate care delivery while providing a platform upon which to discuss and promote best practices, innovation, environmental responsibility and climate change resiliency. www.greenhealthcare.ca

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Advice for Potential Users

Before purchasing any electric micro-mobility device, Chan suggests giving serious thought to your budget, use-cases, and storage accessibility.

Also give thought to the primary purpose of your e-bike. Will it be leisure, commuting, cargo and/or carrying children? Will you be riding in dry weather only, or all types of weather? How far will you be riding on a regular basis? Where will you store this bike and charge it? Addressing these simple questions will help you better understand which specific device or model is best suited for you.

In addition, carrying the bike up and down stairs can be quite challenging so Chan encourages potential users to test how easy the e-bike is to carry (with and without the battery pack). Consider also whether you will need to load your e-bike into/onto a vehicle for transport. He further recommends asking the seller to demonstrate how to properly operate and maintain the device. Chan knows dozens of people who use e-bikes similar to his and they all agree that it has made a big positive change in their lives.

Reflection

How much money could YOU save by riding a BPMM device on your commute? Visit our website [HERE](#) and access our savings infographic to help determine if purchasing an e-bike is right for you (COMING SOON).