

An Upper Valley E-Bike Loan Program

BACKGROUND



THE NORWICH TIMES
Good People — Good Places — Good Things Happening

MARCH 10, 2020 | BY DEVIN WILKIE | NO COMMENTS | ALL, YOUR GREEN SPACES

DARTMOUTH STUDENTS TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

The students' results may not sound surprising, but they are certainly informative and highly useful. Analyzing the results of their interviews, they distilled their findings into **four insights**: **first, that people often rely on community-based actions and resource-sharing mechanisms for change**; second, that the decisions people make are based on individual motivations and priorities; third, that though money can be a barrier, people with resources intentionally invest in and explore tools ranging from electric vehicles to solar panels and weatherization; and **fourth and perhaps most importantly, that individuals want to be more resilient than they are, but they often lack sufficient information and can be overwhelmed by the information that is available**. That may sound confusing, but in short, it means that people want to find more ways to address climate change locally, and they do when they have the opportunity and support, but they may not know what to do.

BACKGROUND

Norwich Energy Committee Experience

- Repetition is important
- Example: Solarize campaigns each year since 2012

First year (2012) = 11 households

Over next 7 years = average 39

25% of residences have gone solar



History

- Local Motion, Burlington, VT: “statewide nonprofit organization working to make biking and walking a way of life in every corner of Vermont”
- Traveling E-Bike Lending Library, to towns around Vermont
- August 2019 in Norwich
- September 2019 in Hartford

History

- In Norwich, all 10 six-day loan slots were **reserved within 24 hours** of the first announcement of the loan program
- Norwich scrambled to add



- Drop-in, 30-minute test-rides on four non-loan days drew **40+ participants** – despite several rainy days
- An evening “show-n-tell” that drew ~20

Project

Big interest in learning about e-bikes

+

Repetition, repetition, repetition

=

A locally-based fleet
of e-bikes

Project

An Upper Valley E-Bike “Lending Library” ...

- Funds from local donors
- Planning support from Vital Communities
- A project of Local Motion
 - LM owns, insures the e-bikes
 - LM provides liability insurance for volunteers
 - LM provides online reservation system
- Operations coordinated by local volunteers
- Transport, maintenance through Cowbell Mobile Bike Shop in West Lebanon

Project

2020 Upper Valley E-Bike “Lending Library” ...

- Three e-bikes:
 - Turbo Como from Specialized
 - RadWagon cargo bike from Rad Power Bikes
 - Regular bike converted to e-bike
- Six town energy committees:
 - VT – Thetford, Norwich, Hartford, Hartland
 - NH – Hanover, Plainfield/Cornish

Project

2020 Upper Valley E-Bike “Lending Library” ...

- In each town, collaboration between Energy Committee and location host (library, town recreation department)
- Follow-up consultation available to all borrowers with VBike staff, to match best e-bike with travel needs and budget

Project

2020 Upper Valley E-Bike “Lending Library” ...

- Transportation is biggest emissions sector – also, biggest opportunity.
- From the Dartmouth students’ study, people rely on “community-based action” and “often lack sufficient information” – loans can provide that information
- Local fleet will enable us to repeat, repeat, repeat.