

TORONTO'S WAR AGAINST ELECTRIC VEHICLES

In April 2001 Canada amended the federal Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations to recognize the electric power-assisted bicycle (“ebikes”).

At the time the Canada Gazette reported:

"Continuing to subject power-assisted bicycles to the safety standards for limited-speed motorcycles would, to all intents and purposes, have prevented this type of vehicle from being marketed in Canada, which would have deprived Canadians of a safe and non-polluting alternative mode of transportation."

and

"...in accordance with its 2000 Sustainable Development Strategy, it is the Department's policy to promote and encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation that can reduce traffic congestion in urban areas, while also protecting the environment."

and under Benefits and Costs:

"Despite the fact that the benefits and costs of this amendment have not been quantified, it will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the environment and the economy. Subjecting power-assisted bicycles to the requirements for limited-speed motorcycles effectively exclude them from the Canadian market. The new definition will allow the sale of a new means of transportation that is attractive, safe, and environment-friendly."

In October 2006 Ontario Minister of Transportation Cansfield announced a three year "Pilot Project" for ebikes to the media and the Legislature:

"Through this pilot, we are giving people the opportunity to make healthy choices for our environment and help us realize that our vision of a sustainable transportation system is here in Ontario. So it is an important and very exciting day. Ontarians now have more mobility choices that are environmentally friendly, and I know that all members will join me in encouraging the safe use of these vehicles on our roads."

In April 2009 Bill 126, The Road Safety Act passed third reading in the Ontario Legislature and power-assist bicycles became fully legalized in Ontario.

April 2011, self-appointed experts in Toronto City Hall declare the matter needs further study and begin to use old city by-laws to ban and restrict power-assisted bicycles from city bike lanes and bike paths. Toronto City Parks and Environment Committee members give tacit consent to Toronto's war on ebikes by continuing to ignore the situation...

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