Designed by MIT’s SENSEable City Lab

Copenhagen may seem pleasantly rife with bikers—36 percent of commuters cycle to work—but the city wants even more of its citizens to take to the paths. In order to get half of the population on bikes by 2015, it enlisted students at MIT’s SENSEable City Lab to figure out how to convince would-be bikers to abandon concerns over distance, topography, and safety. The result is the Copenhagen Wheel, an attachable hub (containing a motor, batteries, and an internal gear system) that converts a standard two-wheeler into an electric hybrid.

Riders get a boost when needed from a 250-watt motor, powered by batteries that store energy dissipated during braking and cycling. And environmental sensors housed in the hub upload information on air and noise pollution, congestion, and road conditions to the user’s smart phone. City Lab hopes to put it into production within the next year (with the help of Ducati Energia, of Italy). But at a target price of $600 (bike not included), the device may pose another obstacle to those weary of cycling: cost.

senseable.mit.edu

***

Original Story Can Be Found At:
http://www.metropolismag.com/cda/story.php?artid=4472