

Why we are switching to an Electric Vehicle

RANGE - This is *the* critical factor that made our decision to purchase an electric propulsion vehicle a prudent and practical choice. The 2017 Chev Bolt is rated for a driving range of 383 kilometers on a full charge. Most on-line video postings suggest that conservative driving will yield more than this. Such capacity will take us to the city or the airport or the ferry *and back* without "range anxiety." Further, six months after placing our order, Nova Scotia Power announced a series of twelve fast charging stations along the province's 100 series highways. This followed New Brunswick's installation of ten level 3 chargers adjacent to the Trans Canada Highway in that province.

AFFORDABILITY - We deliberately opted for the "LT" rather than the "Premier" trim model to reduce the cost some \$5,000. Even so, our basic 2017 Bolt, with a few added practical options plus taxes, sells in the upper-mid-price range for common folk like us. Our 2012 Toyota Prius trade-in reduces the net cost to an acceptable amount. This is not cheap, nor is it extravagant when pro-rated over the six years we are likely to keep the vehicle and compared to cars of similar quality. There is value for money here when factors such as reduced servicing, no expensive fossil fueling and time saved "at the pump and in the service bay" are considered.

COMPATIBILITY - The EV will integrate seamlessly into our values, home and lifestyle. Over the past decade we have added solar hot water panels, time-of-day space heating, and a 20 panel photo-voltaic system to our residence. This means that we can generate the electricity to power our new car for local trips and beyond depending upon daily and seasonal solar output. Even better, we can direct any excess PV production during daylight onto the NSP grid in exchange for half-priced vehicle charging overnight. Alas, a winter "wet blanket" is thrown over this economy when snow covers the panels on the roof!

DEPENDABILITY - Almost all media reports to date have given the Bolt glowing reviews though, admittedly, there have been a few "teething" problems acknowledged. Even if we wanted a Tesla --- which we definitely do not --- the nearest Tesla dealer is probably 1,400 kilometers away in Montreal. We insist on a service location close to home where we can have any concerns addressed in a genuine and timely manner. In case of distress or angst our answer to the popular question "Who ya gonna call?" will be either Steele Chev in Dartmouth or Bruce Chev in Middleton. Though we will have waited 10 months to have our down payment consummated by vehicle delivery, I fear that Mr. Musk would not have dispatched a Tesla to our "remote" region for up to two years. And ... there are Chevrolet EV franchises across Atlantic Canada and beyond should we need emergency repairs.

COMFORT - As a result of dogged persistence we obtained a test drive in a Bolt in Sacramento, California in January of this year when we were visiting friends in that area. The height and leg room was impressive. The narrow, thin seats were very firm and comfortable. Visibility from the front was much improved over our current car. Acceleration went beyond what I regularly demand and, of course, the engine noise was whisper quiet. Sign us up! After several successive vehicles with leather seats, I am actually looking forward to the more "moderating" feel of cloth upholstery and that heated, leather-wrapped steering wheel in winter.

SPACIOUS – For a compact car this vehicle has lots of room. Back seat guests will especially be delighted with the leg room and flat floor. An important consideration for us was the amount of additional cargo capacity/configuration that can be created when the back seats are folded down and the "false" floor in the rear lift gate area is removed. This flexibility will enable us to continue to make regular trips to the compost site with 3 or 4 plastic bins filled with brush and leaves and do other miscellaneous errands. We are hoping/gambling that our restrained driving style and vigilance of tire wear and proper inflation will make the absence of any "spare" under the cargo floor a non-issue.

AVAILABILITY - Well, *relative* availability. Subsequent to the January test drive, we followed up with considerable due-diligence investigation and finally accepted the offer of Steele Chev in Dartmouth, placing our deposit on 28 February 2017. They were at length able to pry a commitment from GM in early August for the first Atlantic Canada Bolt and we are told to anticipate pick up at the end of October or very early November.

WARRANTY - While there have been a couple bone-chilling narrations on YouTube lamenting GM's indifference to vehicle battery nightmares, I anticipate our chances of experiencing this dilemma to be slim because we are at the end of the first production year. Furthermore, I believe that the dealership will champion our cause should we be power-less at the roadside. They have a lot riding on our satisfaction ... even without knowing the alacrity and frequency with which we shoulder signs and march for causes to promote justice and the public interest.

The Bolt has the usual array of industry-wide warranties and the 8 year /160,000 kilometers coverage of the battery and electric components is very reassuring for folks who are purchasing their first EV. Furthermore, there is the now-ubiquitous 3 year "roadside rescue package" to assuage driver anxiety whether it is battery blues or tire blow-out.

INITIATIVE – If not now, when; if not us, who? It is time to demonstrate some leadership. Yes, the expenditure of this much money for a private automobile by a retired couple smacks of entitled indulgence ...because it is. We could default to bus or taxi travel for local trips and rent a vehicle for "essential" occasional trips and save money. An equally pro-social action would be to invest time and energy into trying to facilitate the creation of a local car-share club.

So, the option we have chosen is not that of an "environmental saint," though it is relatively socially responsible and defensible. We hope seeing our EV about the town where we live and beyond encourages others to abandon their internal combustion engine (ICE) auto and embrace an electric vehicle of choice that mirrors their circumstances and financial means at the earliest practical moment. Time is of the essence... and there will be no U-Turn ahead. Roger Boutilier, Wolfville, 2 Oct. 2017