

WORKING TOGETHER FOR EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION



**STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-24**

MOVINGMAINE 
- NETWORK -
Improving transportation access for all

Table of Contents

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER	2
OUR JOURNEY & OUR ROLE	4
TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS & OUR RESPONSE	5
KEY ISSUES	6
Access to Opportunity & Community	6
Safe, Accessible Streets & Roads	6
Robust Policies & Practices to Support Equitable Access to Mobility	6
CORE STRATEGIES	7
Strengthen Cross-Sector Networking	7
Support Better Coordination	7
Inform Effective Policy	7
Amplify Mobility Stories	7
CORE VALUES	8
Place Equity & Inclusion First	8
Center People with Lived Experience	8
Connect, Share & Collaborate	8
Focus on Coordination & Efficiency	8
Embrace Mobility as Fundamental to Health and Well-Being	8
Balance Sustainability, Innovation & Access	8
OUR TEAM	8
MOBILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN ACTION	9
POLICY PRIORITIES	10
Increase Affordability of Transportation	10
Ensure Access to Community and Public Transportation	10
Increase Safety and Accessibility of Walking, Biking, and Rolling	11
Increase Coordination of Transportation Access Efforts	11

About this Plan

This plan provides a framework to guide the Moving Maine Network through the end of 2024. The document was written and designed by Zoe Miller, Moving Maine Facilitator and is available online at <http://www.movingmaine.org/>. To request translations, printed copies, or in large print, please contact info@movingmaine.org.

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

Launched in 2018, the Moving Maine Network is a multi-sector, statewide collaborative working to ensure all Mainers have access to transportation regardless of background, destination, or geography. The Network strives to connect, empower, and expand the efforts of the hundreds of individuals, groups, and organizations who work on transportation access and equity across Maine. The potential strength of 300+ individuals and organizations who care about transportation access and equity is enormous.

Over the next three years, the Moving Maine Network will increase the power of our network by significantly growing connectivity, elevating voices from across our network, and strengthening the network's influence by aligning and empowering collective action on key issues. Our leadership in this space will encourage forward progress together.



BSOOB Transit Mobility Manager Perian Carpenter assisting a rider who is exiting the bus.

OUR JOURNEY & OUR ROLE

The Moving Maine Network was born in May 2018 when over 100 individuals gathered for a summit on improving transportation access in Maine. Convened by a committed, multisector group of partner organizations that included Maine Department of Transportation, Biddeford-Saco-Old Orchard Beach Transit, Greater Portland Council of Governments, Maine Cancer Foundation, Maine Council on Aging, and Maine Primary Care Association, the summit led to creation of a blueprint for better transportation coordination across Maine. The resulting blueprint outlined a mobility management network for Maine that provides a forum to connect, network, and share best practices and works to increase coordination, spur innovation, and inform policy changes. This blueprint was used to secure funding through the Federal Transit Administration, enabling Moving Maine to launch in early 2019.

Mission and Vision:

We envision a Maine where all people have access to transportation regardless of background, destination, or geography. To achieve this vision, the Moving Maine Network empowers and connects people and communities to advance coordination and elevate solutions.

The Moving Maine Network offers a forum for learning, connection, and action that is open to everyone who cares about better transportation access for Mainers with barriers. We include individuals, organizations, and communities with a special focus on engaging people with lived experience of transportation barriers (related to geography, age, ability, race/ethnicity, income, and others).

The 2018 blueprint for the Network identified three areas fundamental to advancing transportation access in Maine. These will continue to shape our work:

STRONG COORDINATION

*Strengthen connections
and increase mobility
management capabilities
among stakeholders*

EFFECTIVE POLICY

*Inform and advocate for
effective policy at the
regional and state level*

EQUITABLE SOLUTIONS

*Support communities to
advance innovative and
equitable transportation
solutions*

Since 2018, the Network has engaged more than 500 unique individuals and organizations in Maine and beyond for peer learning and networking. We have supported action planning for regional networks across Maine and developed a policy platform focused on access and equity. As we celebrate the initial growth of the Network, we recognize the hard work ahead to unlock the power of the network to make the transportation system work better for all Mainers. The Moving Maine Network is well positioned to leverage prior success and current engagement to make this greater vision a reality.

TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS & OUR RESPONSE

With Maine’s vast geography and largely rural communities, the sentiment that “you need a car” is common. While owning and maintaining a vehicle is seen as a necessity for many households, there are a considerable amount of people who cannot drive or cannot afford to. People in the "can't drive" category include older adults, people with disabilities, children and young teens, asylum seekers, and people who've lost their driver's license. People in the "can't afford" group are folks with limited or no income and those with no credit history and no one to cosign a loan.

Households With No Vehicle Access	
Population Group	Percentage
Maine	7%
65+	10%
Black/African-American	15%
Multiracial	13%
Native American	13%
Immigrant	10%

Approximately 7% of Maine households lack vehicle access (U. S. Census American Community Survey, 2015-19 average). That is roughly 40,000 households. These households are more likely to be people of color, immigrants, and older adults as the data on this page illustrates. In some rural parts of the state, the percentages are as high as 18%.

In addition to those who can’t drive or can’t afford a vehicle, there are many who struggle to keep up with vehicle costs. In 2022, AAA reported the average car ownership cost at \$10,728 a year, or \$894 a month.

Transportation is key to accessing such opportunities as employment, education, and health care. People with disabilities and rural residents with no access to public transportation are more likely to experience isolation and poverty. Transportation to

healthcare is a big challenge for many people who live in rural areas, are low-income and/or immigrants. Lack of transportation is also a barrier for youth in accessing out-of-school-time opportunities and for people experiencing homelessness in getting to food stores. Disability Rights Maine reports that transportation is the biggest barrier for getting to work among their constituents.

TRANSPORTATION IS A SOCIAL DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

Good health and well-being require much more than medical care and healthy choices. Our lives are shaped by the conditions in which we are born and live – and the systems that determine our opportunities. Transportation is key to accessing such opportunities as employment, education, and health care. But not everyone has equal access to high-quality, reliable, and safe transportation. For example, wealth differences between people of color and non-Hispanic whites make it easier for white residents to purchase a car, giving them increased access to jobs and subsequent higher employment rates. Public transit that is inaccessible for older adults and people with disabilities can leave people who can’t drive stranded. Rural residents with no access to public transportation are more likely to experience isolation and poverty.

KEY ISSUES

This is a dynamic time for transportation access and equity in Maine. The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (a.k.a., the "infrastructure law") will bring an unprecedented amount of funding to Maine's transportation system over the next decade. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Transportation has demonstrated unprecedented support for advancing racial equity and other critical issues, such as pedestrian/bicyclist safety in transportation planning and decision-making. Given the significant barriers to transportation access faced by many Mainers, the Moving Maine Network seeks to make the most of these opportunities. We focus on the following key issues.

Access to Opportunity & Community

Regardless of where one lives in Maine, access to transportation is a necessity. Unfortunately, not everyone has access, whether it is because of affordability, location, or available options. Solutions to transportation will not be a one size fits all scenario and options need to work for different types of geographies (rural, suburban, and urban) and for different groups of people. In some places, the best solution is a community-run volunteer driver program, in others it's a fixed route bus service, and in others it's car-sharing or carpooling with neighbors.

To ensure that every community has affordable, accessible, & diverse transportation, we will grow the capacity of individuals and organizations to coordinate and collaborate within their communities, regions and state, incorporating advocating for equity in developing solutions and making decisions.

Safe, Accessible Streets & Roads

Whether it's wheeling, walking or biking for an entire trip or just the first or last mile, nearly every trip incorporates some amount of active transportation. Yet many of Maine's streets, roads and sidewalks are not safe places for moving outside of a vehicle. We will align our network to elevate the voices of those who roll, walk, and bike with advocates working in active transportation to advance safe, accessible, and welcoming options in our communities.

Robust Policies & Practices to Support Equitable Access to Mobility

Transportation access determines when, how, and whether people can reach opportunities. There is a growing recognition that achieving equitable access to opportunities requires improvements to the transportation system. The Network will support strong and effective policies and practices that center equity in addressing the affordability and accessibility of transportation at local, regional and state level.

CORE STRATEGIES

Strengthen Cross-Sector Networking

We will facilitate an action-oriented, connected network that includes the full range of rural, suburban, and urban transportation modes and services. The network will provide value by offering channels for transportation providers and partners from non-transportation sectors to build relationships, share expertise, and exchange information.

Support Better Coordination

Moving Maine will support mobility management networks in all regions of Maine that are coordinating and taking action to improve transportation access. The network will build the capacity of individuals and organizations through mentoring, training, and convening of a community of practice.

Inform Effective Policy

Moving Maine will convene stakeholders from across sectors and experiences to elevate solutions and champion policy actions. The network will foster understanding among policymakers about the impact of transportation barriers and the most promising solutions.

Amplify Mobility Stories

Moving Maine will collect and share data and stories about transportation and quality of life. The network will elevate voices of lived experience to attract attention to transportation barriers and increase support for solutions. Transportation data will uplift the voices by demonstrating what is happening across Maine with an emphasis on those most impacted.

OUTCOMES

- Expanded connections and partnerships between local and regional groups and individuals.
- Robust tools for networking, peer learning, and information sharing.

OUTCOMES

- Regional Mobility Management networks across the state.
- Technical assistance and capacity building support through a statewide community of practice.

OUTCOMES

- Education and training for state and local decision-makers on barriers and solutions.
- A shared platform of policy solutions.

OUTCOMES

- Publish and promote stories that inspire alignment and collective action on key issues.
- A public-facing dashboard for monitoring and communicating transportation's relationship to quality of life.

WHAT IS MOBILITY MANAGEMENT?

Mobility management is an innovative approach for managing and delivering coordinated transportation services to customers, especially older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes. Mobility management focuses on meeting individual customer needs through a wide range of transportation options and service providers. It also focuses on coordinating these services and providers to achieve a more efficient transportation service delivery system.

Mobility management looks beyond a single transportation service or solution to a “family of services” philosophy that can offer a wide range of services and options to meet an equally wide array of community demographics and needs. Mobility management requires a customized approach, meaning no two programs are exactly alike, even though they share a core philosophy, desired outcomes and require partnerships across the spectrum.

CORE VALUES

The Moving Maine Steering Committee adopted these core values in September 2021.

Place Equity & Inclusion First

We believe inclusive and equitable approaches are critical to improving transportation access. We strive to make our meetings and communications will be accessible and welcoming to older adults, people with disabilities, people with lower incomes, LGBTQ+, black, indigenous, and other communities of color, and other historically and currently underserved communities.

Center People with Lived Experience

We believe engaging and involving people with lived experience of transportation barriers is critical to the success of our work. This will involve looking at the inequitable effects of policies and services on historically and currently underserved communities and working to make positive change.

Connect, Share & Collaborate

We believe building infrastructure for relationships and idea-sharing amongst stakeholders generates solutions and action. Through open coordination among members and open sharing with the public, we support peer-to-peer education and awareness of community-centered solutions. By building partnerships across sectors and perspectives, we catalyze opportunities to take action on solutions for better transportation access.

Focus on Coordination & Efficiency

We believe that better coordination among transportation providers, non-transportation sectors – including public, private, and business sector entities – and transportation users is an essential element for ensuring Maine's transportation options efficiently and effectively meet the needs of people throughout the state.

Embrace Mobility as Fundamental to Health and Well-Being

We believe transportation access is a key ingredient to thriving communities and quality of life for individuals. We maintain a holistic perspective on transportation challenges in Maine by seeking to understand the daily needs and challenges, pre-existing assets, and long-term goals of families and individuals who use transportation.

Balance Sustainability, Innovation & Access

We believe that advancing environmental priorities and technological innovation can be done while centering equity for underserved populations. We seek to integrate equity considerations into championing efforts like expanded use of electric vehicles, technology for online trip planning, and alternatives to transportation like expanded access to broadband and telehealth. We also acknowledge the need to consider expanded access to more traditional means of transportation for those with fewer alternatives or means.

OUR TEAM

The Moving Maine Network is managed by a team of two part-time staff. Facilitator Zoe Miller, MPH, has more than 20 years of experience building and running coalitions that improve health and advance equity. Coordinator Heather Drake is a skilled event planner and membership builder who emphasizes inclusive engagement. Governance is provided through a multisector Steering Committee that meets five times a year and an Executive Committee composed of staff, workgroup chairs, and two representatives with lived experience supports staff in running Moving Maine. The network is an independent initiative with fiscal agency from nonprofit GrowSmart Maine.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Whether statewide or regional, mobility management programs work to help individuals navigate the transportation system, while also working to make the system more coordinated and easier to access. Programs work on increasing direct supports for customers like travel training, trip planning, and financial supports. They also help communities develop partnerships and build capacity by leveraging new funding. Mobility management program staff are experts in the local transportation landscape who use a customer-focused approach to help older adults, people with disabilities, and other transportation-disadvantaged riders access mobility options, and help transportation providers and aging and disability services agencies enhance their mobility services through coordination. Core components of mobility management programs include:

"In communities where coordination is made a priority, citizens benefit from more extensive service, lower costs, and easier access to transportation."
Federal Transit Administration.

- **Cultivating partnerships:** Strong relationships are at the core of a mobility management program – including not just transportation providers and planners, but businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, and other community stakeholders.
- **Facilitating design and implementation of solutions:** Mobility management brings partners together to develop solutions to fit the community's needs and secure resources to achieve the vision.
- **Expanding low-cost programs:** Mobility management assists with expanding the number of volunteer drivers and transit ambassadors to facilitate access among people with moderate to low mobility levels.
- **Applying universal design principles:** Mobility management seeks to create a transit system that may be accessed, understood, and used by people of any age or size or having any physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability or disability.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT IN NEW ENGLAND

Mobility Management Programs are taking hold across the U.S. and here in New England. Efforts in New Hampshire and Massachusetts hint at what is possible for Maine

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Launched in 2022, the New Hampshire Mobility Management Network includes a statewide mobility manager position and 8 regional mobility managers. The Network is a collaborative partnership between the State Coordinating Council, Regional Coordinating Councils, New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), other state agencies/commissions, the mobility manager, and Transport New Hampshire which provides technical assistance and project management. The NH Mobility Management Network is funded through a combination of transportation and public health funding.

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is embarking on a study in fall 2022 to create a framework for establishing a statewide system of regional mobility managers to improve community mobility.

POLICY PRIORITIES

These priorities were developed through input from hundreds of stakeholders representing various interests and lived experiences across the state. Adopted by the Steering Committee in fall 2022, these priorities and the related actions will advance the key mobility issues our community seeks to address.

1. Increase Affordability of Transportation

Moving Maine supports efforts to lower public transportation and personal vehicle costs through both public and private resources and policies that remove barriers and create incentives. Public transportation consists of a variety of modes including buses, ferries, light rail, and paratransit services.

Key Strategies

1a. Increase state funding for transit. Rework state transportation funding to provide additional funds to public transportation. Investment in public transportation increases economic returns, saves household income, and provides individuals with a better quality of life.ⁱ Moving Maine will align with [Policy Action 2023](#), led by Build Maine and GrowSmart Maine which includes a focus on this.

1b. Pilot a Universal Basic Mobility Program. Provide a minimum guaranteed level of transportation through a means-tested program that subsidizes public transit, vanpool, ebikes, and other services.

1c. Reduce fare-related barriers to public transport. Remove barriers to accessing transit for people with low incomes through the creation of zero-fare transit or expansion of reduced fare programs.ⁱⁱ

2. Ensure Access to Community and Public Transportation

Moving Maine supports efforts to provide every community with access to affordable and accessible transportation solutions that ensure people can reach medical, social, educational, and other opportunities. The specific solutions and services will be different for different places – based on the need and the geography.

Key Strategies

2a. Streamline contracting and systems for transportation providers receiving state funding. In many cases, transportation providers hold numerous state contracts with different terms and conditions – and reporting expectations. Aligning these using guidance from the [U.S. Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility](#) will result in greater efficiency and cost savings.

2b. Assess ways to expand ability to utilize non-emergency medical transportation through the DHHS brokerage system. A segment of Mainers who are ineligible for MaineCare but have limited income lack important transportation resources. Making changes to Maine's non-emergency medical transportation structure will require working within federal regulations.

2c. Improve consumer experience of ADA paratransit and MaineCare-funded services. Consumers who depend on ADA paratransit and MaineCare-funded services frequently note lack of communication, inadequate language access services, and long wait times as key concerns. Mechanisms for addressing these concerns – and communication on actions being taken – are needed to increase trust and improve the consumer experience.

2d. Increase funding, incentives, and support for volunteer driver programs. In many parts of the state, volunteer driver programs are the most cost effective and feasible solution for providing transportation access. These programs would have greater sustainability with support and funding through state government and public-private partnerships.

2e. Increase state mileage reimbursement rate. Adjusting mileage reimbursement rates to keep pace with costs will enable service providers to keep providing rides and volunteer driver programs to recruit and retain staff to meet the demand for rides throughout the state.

3. Increase Safety and Accessibility of Walking, Biking, and Rolling

Moving Maine works to ensure that walking, bicycling, and the use of mobility devices such as walkers and wheelchairs are fully integrated into the transportation network – and that roads and sidewalks are safe places for those traveling outside of a motor vehicle.

3a. Advance implementation of Complete Streets Policies. Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, and maintaining streets to enable safe access for all people of all ages and abilities who need to use them.ⁱⁱⁱ MaineDOT is currently revising the state's policy.^{iv} This is an opportunity to maximize the policy's power to create places that support safe, convenient, and enjoyable walking, biking, and rolling. Moving Maine is partnering to lead the statewide Complete Streets Working Group for [Policy Action 2023](#).

3b. Strengthen enforcement mechanism and compliance standards for ADA requirements. The Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees people with disabilities equal access to public spaces and transportation.^v Greater urgency is needed in the transition to accessible infrastructure and services.

3c. Increase state funding for pedestrian, wheelchair, and bicycle infrastructure. We must rework state transportation funding to provide additional funding to pedestrian, wheelchair, and bicycle infrastructure. Moving Maine is part of the [Policy Action 2023](#) effort in this arena and will continue to collaborate with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine on advocacy efforts.

4. Increase Coordination of Transportation Access Efforts

Moving Maine will advance cross-sector coordination and support mobility management in all regions of Maine.

4a. Create statewide and regional mobility management programs. Coordinated mobility management programs provide the capacity to address gaps and advance solutions, enabling improvements to the reach, efficiency, and affordability of transportation.^{vi} Across the U.S., and here in New England, states are putting structures in place to ensure communities have capacity to address transportation challenges and increase access. Maine should follow the lead of other states in establishing statewide and regional mobility management programs.

ⁱ American Public Transportation Association <https://www.apta.com/>

ⁱⁱ Barone, Christina, "Fare Policy—& Zero Fares—Can Help Transit Agencies & the Communities They Service Post-Pandemic" (2022). Nelson Nygaard. <https://umjp9n8g2j2ft5j5637up17u-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Fare-Policy%E2%80%94and-Zero-Fares%E2%80%94Can-Help-Transit-Agencies-and-the-Communities-They-Serve-Recover-Post-Pandemic.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ More details on Complete Streets are available at this link <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/what-are-complete-streets/>

^{iv} MaineDOT's current policy is available at this link <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/completestreets/>

^v U.S. DOT Regulations on ADA <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/civil-rights-ada/ada-regulations>

^{vi} National Center for Mobility Management <https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/for-mobility-managers/>