

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Transportation Working Group – Maine Climate Council**

Meeting details: Wednesday, May 8, 2024, 1pm – 4pm, hybrid meeting

#### **1) Welcome**

*Meeting Purpose:* to review and provide feedback on draft recommendations and strategies developed by the Working Group

#### **2) Review of Materials**

The TWG spent 15-20 minutes reading through the TWG proposed recommendations and actions. During the review, the group was asked to think about the following questions:

- What are the most important revisions that you'd like to see?
- What do we need to discuss to strengthen the recommendations and actions?

#### **3) Focus on Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled**

The TWG Members provided the following feedback on this section:

- For the education and awareness action, further explore who might be most likely to do a mode shift (perhaps through case studies). This could not only be underserved populations, but also climate-conscious people of all income levels.
- Within the actions, strengthen the economic connection of transit and active transportation as a means of traveling from home to work, the economic benefit for households and companies, etc.
- Add a statement about supporting transit operations, in particular transit operators, as part of the clean energy / climate workforce.
- Clarify that our public transit needs to be more reliable in terms of running hours and frequency.
- Innovative transit pilots should include micro-transit in areas where buses are not available or have a minimal service area.
- Consider the importance of providing EV incentives to volunteer drivers who serve the aging population in the lower density areas.
- Reference the Public Transit Advisory Council (PTAC), which will develop two reports with recommendations during the time period that will be covered by updated Maine Won't Wait. Also consider referencing the Maine Trails Coalition, which has prioritized trails.
- Develop best practices from the MaineDOT Village Partnership Initiative (VPI) and provide implementation models to enable municipalities to improve their villages and downtowns, even if they are not participating in the partnership.
- Explore different types of VMT targets (e.g., per capita target, targets for transit, active transportation, and shared rides, etc.)
- Encourage the Climate Change Council to collect the data needed to gauge the cost-effectiveness of different VMT options, as related to carbon reductions.
- Explore VMT offsets/modeshift for roadway projects that increase VMT.

- Additional comments on the transit section will be provided after the meeting.
- The TWG discussed considerations for policy action

#### **4. Focus on Accelerating Maine’s Transition to light-duty Electric Vehicles**

The TWG Members provided the following feedback on this section:

- Add public safety, police, etc. to the “niche” opportunities under the EV rebate program.
- For the education and awareness campaigns, leverage national studies on consumer attitudes, but still use a Maine-based communications firm.
- There was a discussion about exploring how to reward dealers that are promoting EVs.
- Under implementation of extending Maine’s electric vehicle charging network, add the NECEC funding for chargers.
- For education and outreach on EVs there could be more of a focus on technicians.
- Increase emphasis on superusers.
- Explore adding incentives for volunteer drivers to the action on decreasing the purchase cost of EVs.
- Revise language on “review” state and local codes and ordinances to “Find example state and local codes that support...”
- Do we need more specificity on “highspeed” chargers ?
- Address getting low-income homes ready for charging. Suggested text: “Explore ways to address barriers to charging in LMI single-family homes.”
- Clarify that funding from the CFI grant will be in areas *near* LMI households.
- Simplify text for policy action item.
- Throughout recommendation and actions replace “explore” with stronger language like “assess” or “evaluate.”
- Strengthen references to workplace charging as good for demand management and equity considerations.
- Utility rate design and related policy choices are relevant to light-duty as well as MHDV.
- Target guidance included:
  - Ground in facts and modeling.
  - Celebrate annual progress.
  - Plug-in hybrid vehicles are included in the count (make sure this is clear).
  - It is important to continue reviewing the modeling about predicted impacts of all vehicles.
  - Reference efficiency as well as plug-ins.
- Battery metrics should be part of communication to the public.

#### **5. Focus on Accelerating Maine’s Adoption of Medium- and Heavy-Duty (MDHD) Vehicles**

The TWG Members provided the following feedback on this section:

- There was a discussion around the potential impact of biofuels.
- Could there be an opportunity to work CEI or a similar organization familiar with small businesses?
- Simplify implementation text for policy action.

- Explicitly reference the MDHD Roadmap in the language and add text about adopting Roadmap recommendations.
- Add text on MDHD charging to implementation column for advisory services.
- There was a discussion around funding to supplement federal incentives for school buses.
- For fleet advisory services, it is important to keep in mind that this field continues to evolve.
- Mention electric aviation.
- There was a discussion about proactive utility engagement for charging needs and adding text around demand management.
- For the action on demonstration projects, reference the implementation of LD122, which is related to piloting demonstration projects.
- Add electric school buses to text.
- What is the “support” we’re suggesting for demonstration projects?

#### **6. Wrap-up and Next Steps**

- The next meeting will be held on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is a hybrid meeting, but TWG members are encouraged to attend in person.