
Amplifying Voices: Representing Diverse Perspectives

— Transportation
Working Group —

May Progress Check-In

Reminder of the Project Goal



March 2023

To ensure the populations in Maine most impacted by climate change are aware of and have the opportunity to influence State climate programs and policies by iteratively and intentionally engaging these “priority populations” in the Maine Climate Council process in ways that are meaningful for each population.

The Mitchell Center Team's Role



- Develop engagement topics based on Equity Subcommittee Report (ESC) from March 2023 and Working Group (WG) feedback in January 2024
- Collaborate & contract with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
- Engage with Priority Populations (PPs) & support CBO engagements
- Support engagement approaches that are appropriate and natural for CBOs and PPs & fit within the predetermined timeline
- Communicate feedback from PPs and CBOs to WGs to inform WG recommendations to the Maine Climate Council (today's presentation)
- The inclusion of equity consideration lies with WGs in their recommendations (and then the Council broadly)

Original Priority Populations List from GOPIF

- Low income households, including renters, home owners, and mobile home residents
- Older adults and youth
- Black or POC communities
- Tribal communities
- Low income communities
- Disadvantaged communities
- People with limited English proficiency, including New Mainers
- Recipients of LIHEAP, LIAP, or other energy assistance benefits
- People with mobility challenges
- People without access to reliable transportation
- Migrant farm workers and other outdoor workers
- Businesses in the natural resource industries like agriculture, forestry, and fishing who are operating at the economic margin or suffer disproportionate climate risk
- Un/underemployed people who are also representatives of a priority population or are transitioning from prison or recovery
- Minority, women-owned or veteran owned business enterprises (MWBVEs)
- Rural communities and small towns with limited staff or fiscal capacity
- Climate-frontline communities

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We are continuing conversations with Wabanaki partners, building on multi-year relationships

- 2018-2021 Klein, Ranco, Hart, Penobscot Nation, “Future of Dams” (*Penobscot citizens and DNR staff*)
- 2021-2023 Klein, Lamb, Penobscot Nation & Passamaquoddy Tribe, “Community Window Insert Builds & Energy Justice” (*Penobscot & Passamaquoddy citizens & Housing staff*)
- 2022-2023 Klein, Lamb, Penobscot Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, “Community Resilience Partnership Enrollment” (*citizens & staff from 3 tribes*)
- 2023-2024 Klein, Lamb, ACTT, “Intertribal Solar Cooperative” (*citizens & staff from each Wabanaki nation*)
- 2023-2027+ Klein, Lamb, Wabanaki Sustainable Energy Team, “EPA Star Grant” (*citizens and/or tribal government staff from each Wabanaki nation*)



So far, iterative conversations have underscored the importance of

- Not including Wabanaki nations among a list of “priority populations”
- Recognizing Tribal Sovereignty
- Facilitating Government to Government interactions (e.g., Chiefs, Tribal Council)
- Incorporating tribal decision-making authority in the climate plan process
- Addressing historic injustices

As we continue to learn more about how we can support Government-to-Government interactions:

We are especially grateful to Dr. Darren Ranco, Jasmine Lamb, Natalie Michelle, and Ambassador Bryant for their time and continued efforts in empowering the voices of Wabanaki Tribes.

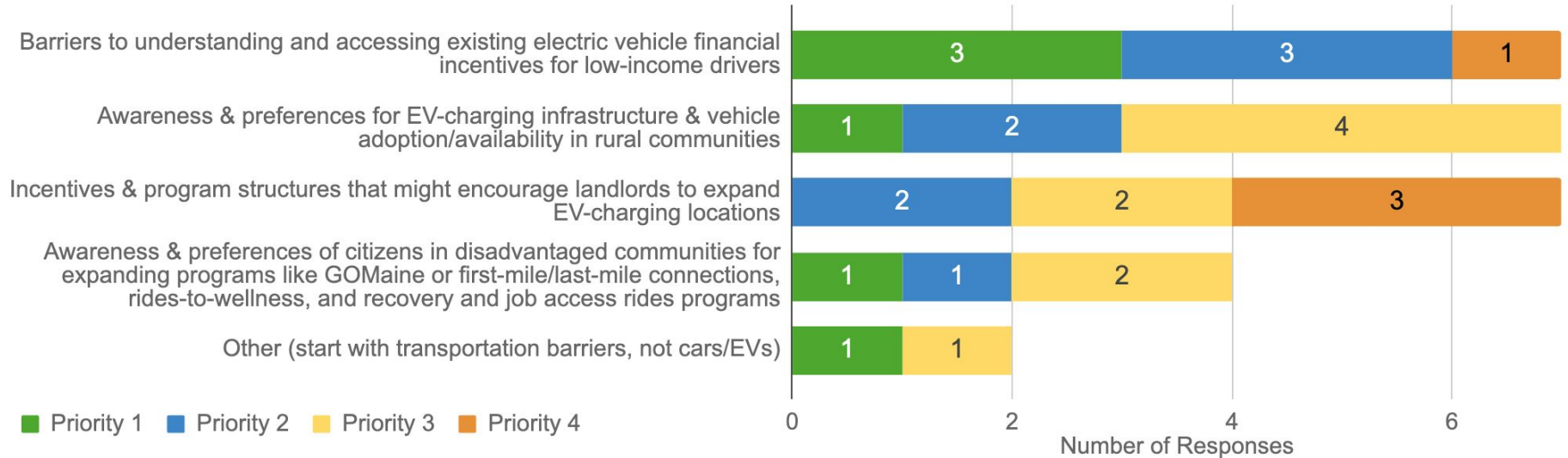
Current Timeline

1. Report to WG about 1st round of engagements -- mid-May 2024
2. Second round of engagement activities -- Summer 2024
3. Report to MCC about 2nd round -- September 2024



Photo from Maine Sustainability and Water Conference session

Thank you for earlier input on your priority questions!



Thank you the **10 TWG members** who responded to our survey in Jan/Feb!

**What are preferences & barriers to understanding/
accessing multiple transportation options and their
associated incentives and infrastructures**

(electric vehicles, public transportation, GOMaine, walking, biking, etc.)?

Our engagement plan built on existing & planned activities

2023-2027 EPA Star grant *"The role of state networks in advancing community-initiated and -engaged sustainable energy action in underserved communities"*

- Community Sustainable Energy Team (Sep 2023-present)
 - *representatives from 6 communities with "high" social vulnerability*
- Maine Community Alternative Energy Survey (April-June 2024)
- Maine Community Alternative Energy Focus group (April 3, 2024)
- Maine Sustainability & Water Conference session 2 (March 28, 2024)
- MAINECAN: the Maine community-led Energy & Climate Action Network

We incorporated MCC questions in these existing/planned engagements & existing classes/meetings we were involved in

From this foundation, we were able to “quickly” develop contracts with 9 community-based organizations

- A Climate To Thrive
- Center for an Ecology-Based Economy
- Coastal Enterprises Inc.
- Community Organizing Alliance
- Kennebec Valley Community Action Partnership
- Maine Council on Aging
- Maine Environmental Education Association
- PassivhausME
- Sunrise County Economic Council

We are also in the process of exploring a contract with the Island Institute

In addition, we have multiple partners supporting this effort in other ways:

- Governor's Cabinet on Aging
- Maine Community Action Partnership
- MCAN!
- Resilient Communities L3C
- UMaine Center on Aging
- WindowDressers
- Mano e Mano

To-date, we have collaboratively completed 29 engagements for this 1st round

- Over **1,000** members of Priority Populations reached
 - Working Group-specific topics
 - Maine Climate Council general topics
- A **variety of engagement approaches**
 - Day-long conference sessions
 - Panels
 - Focus group discussions (ex: at low-income housing, older adult housing)
 - Participation at festivals/shows
 - Community discussions
 - Round Tables (ex: Pathways to Clean Energy Jobs, Climate Change & Food Justice)
 - Teach-ins
 - Webinars
 - Surveys

Photo courtesy of
Community Organizing
Alliance

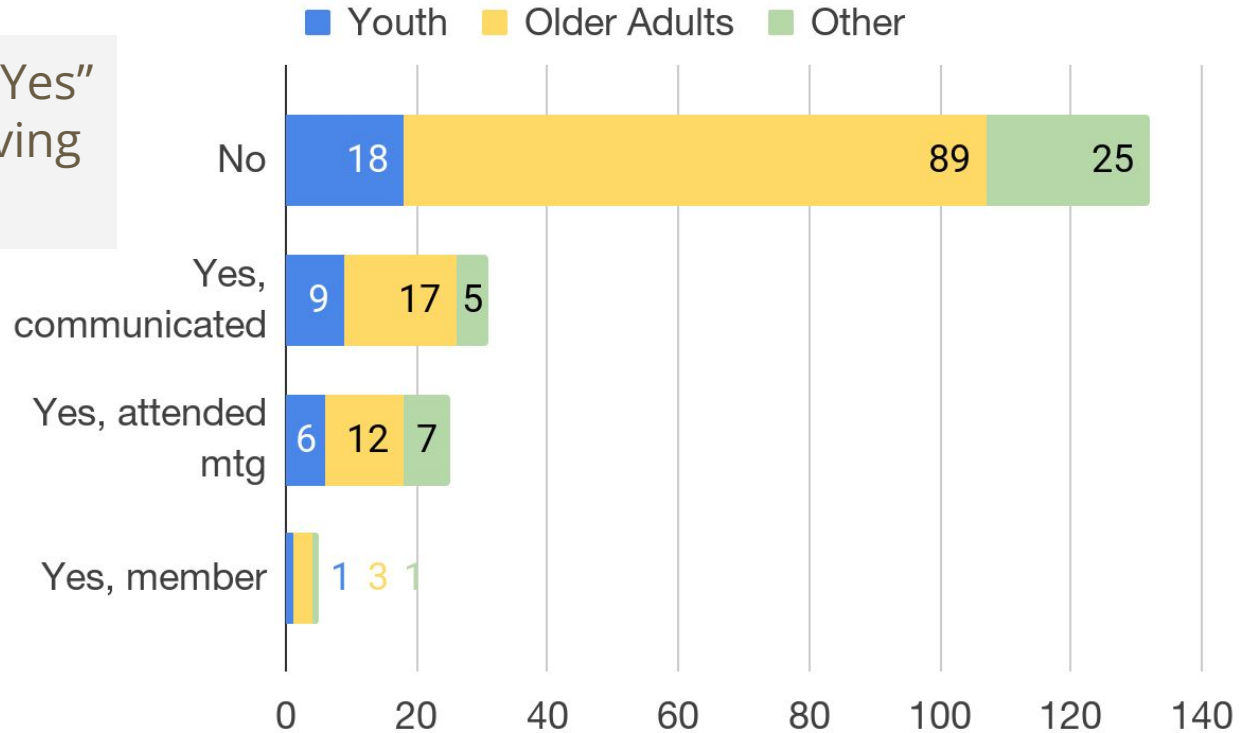


Broad MCC Questions

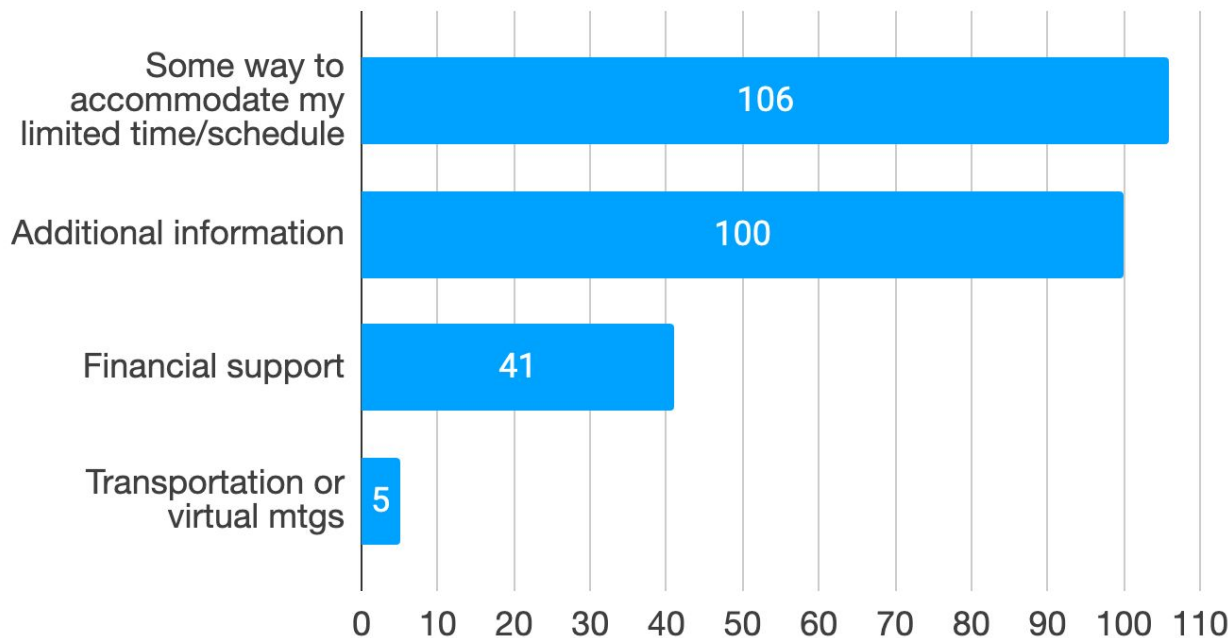
Survey Results: Have you ever been involved in Maine Climate Council activities?

61% of 352 responded "Yes" or "Maybe a little" to having heard of the MCC

68% do/may want to be involved in this update



What type of support would you need to be involved in the Maine Climate Council's update to the climate plan?



"We need to put resources into public engagement on a totally different level, social media engagement, a marketing campaign to really highlight civic engagement as valuable and actually crucial to our lives."

GOOD NEWS: 86% of 63 respondents trust climate change info from the State

When asked ‘What are the biggest needs for you/ your community?’:

10% wrote in a TRANSPORTATION *related issue* including:

- Improved and low-cost public transportation especially to isolated towns
- Emergency medical transportation
- Safe biking



Data from Maine Citizen Survey,
priority population respondents

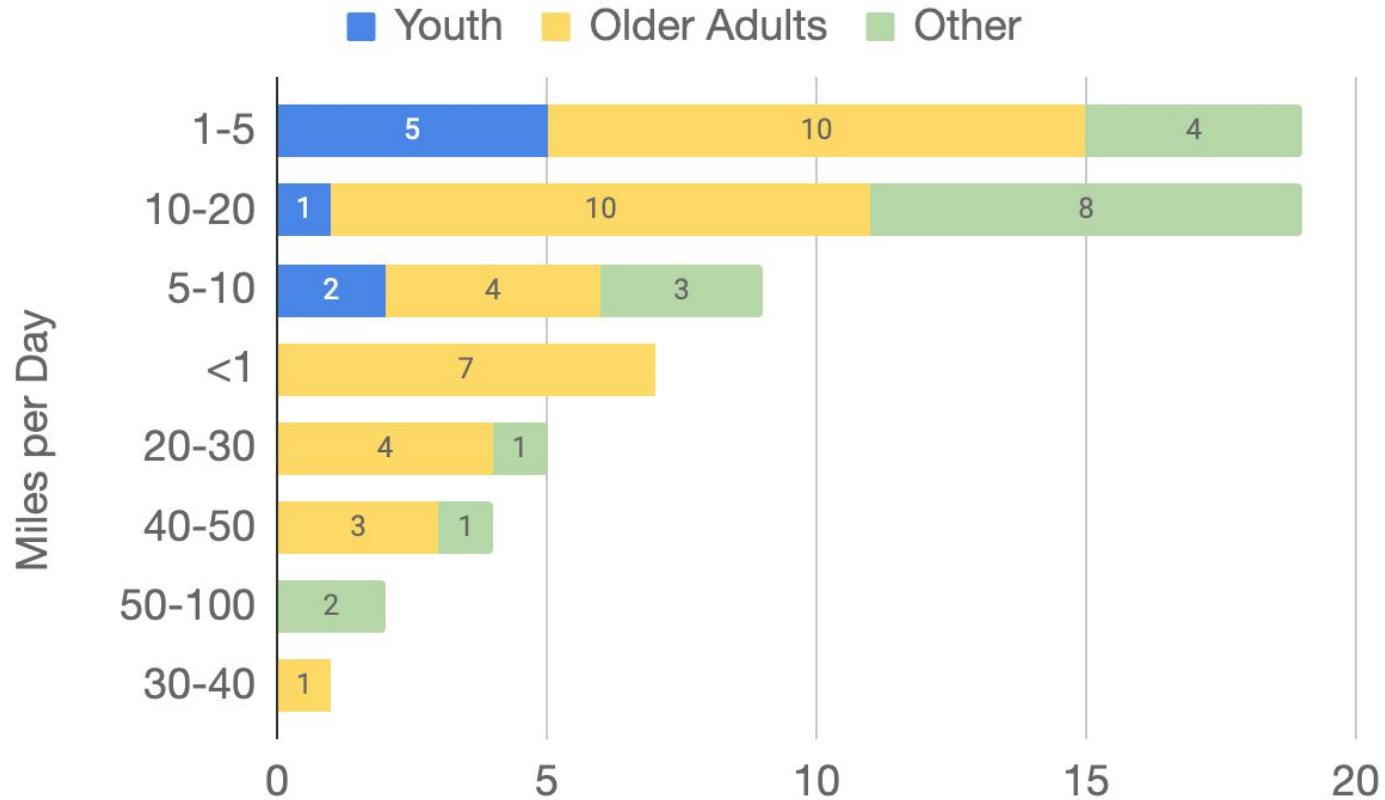
<https://www.tylin.com/work/projects/route-1-corridor-complete-streets-plan>

TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP

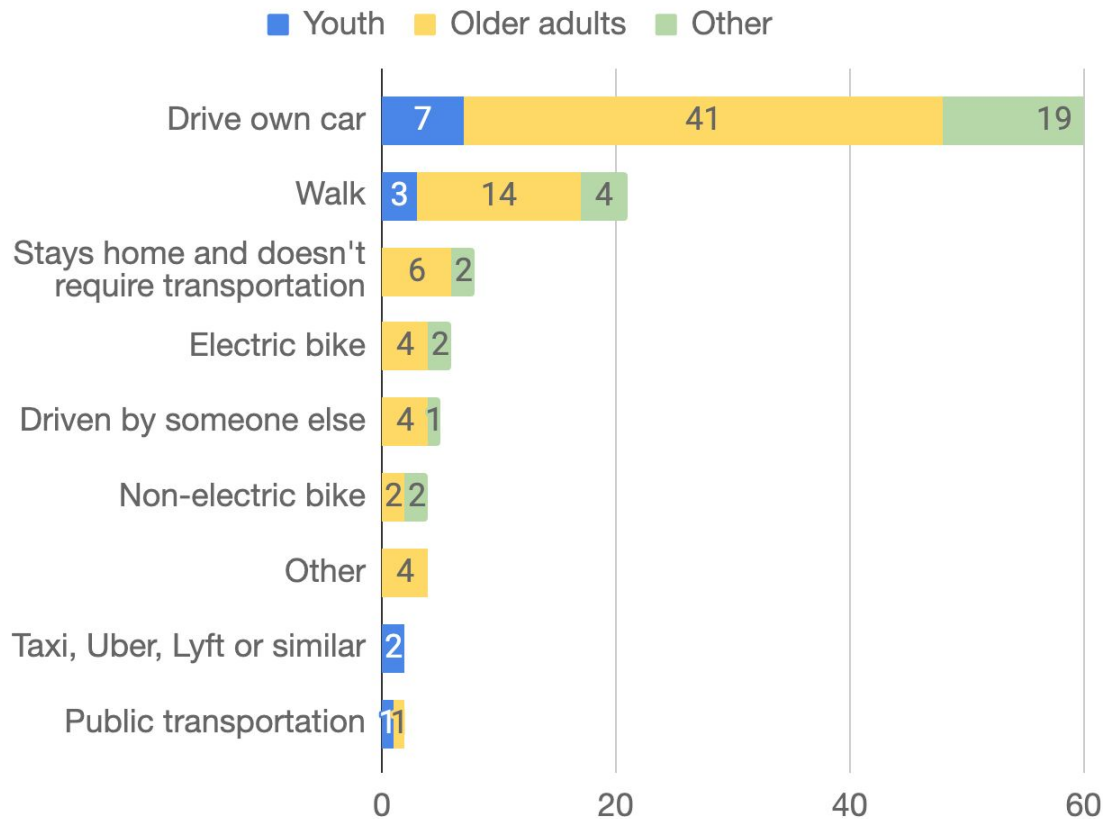
**What are preferences & barriers to understanding/
accessing multiple transportation options and their
associated incentives and infrastructures**

(electric vehicles, public transportation, GOMaine, walking, biking, etc.)?

How far do you travel on a typical day (total, roundtrip)?

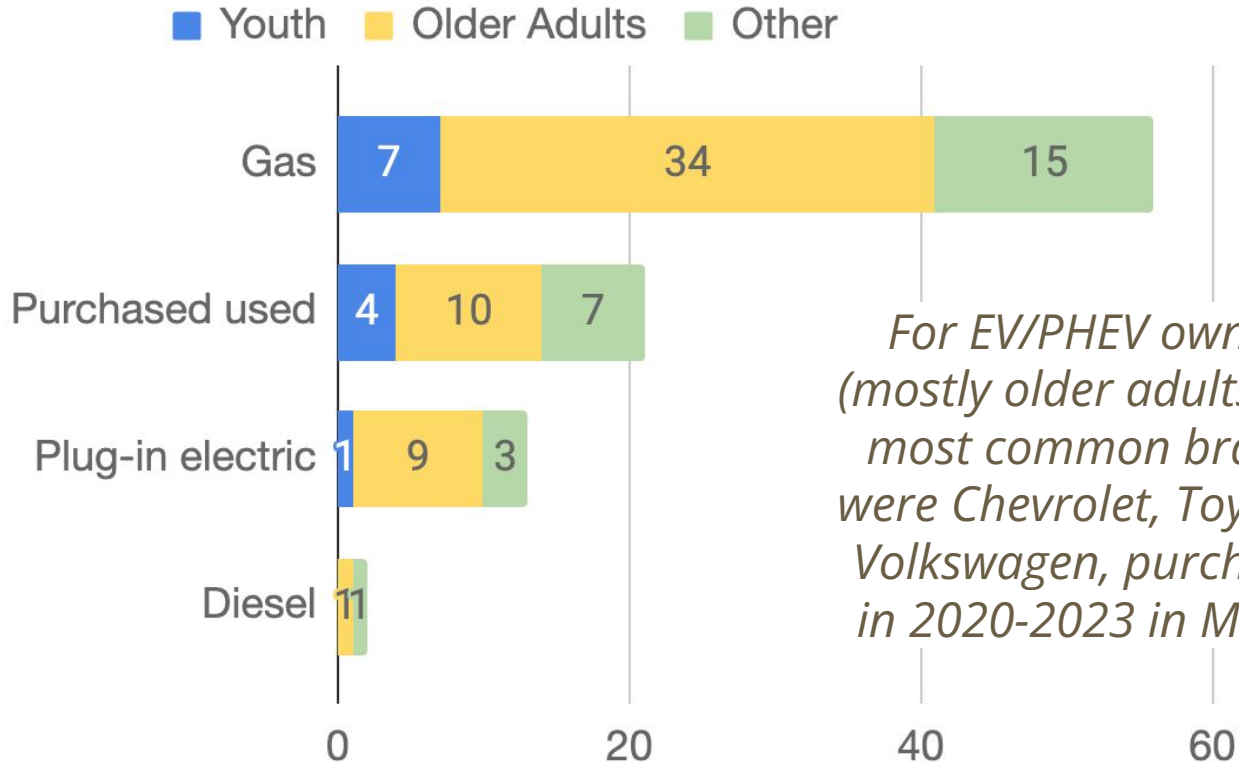


How do you REGULARLY get around?



Both municipal and individual respondents to SCEC survey of Washington County commonly reported significant problems with transportation security.

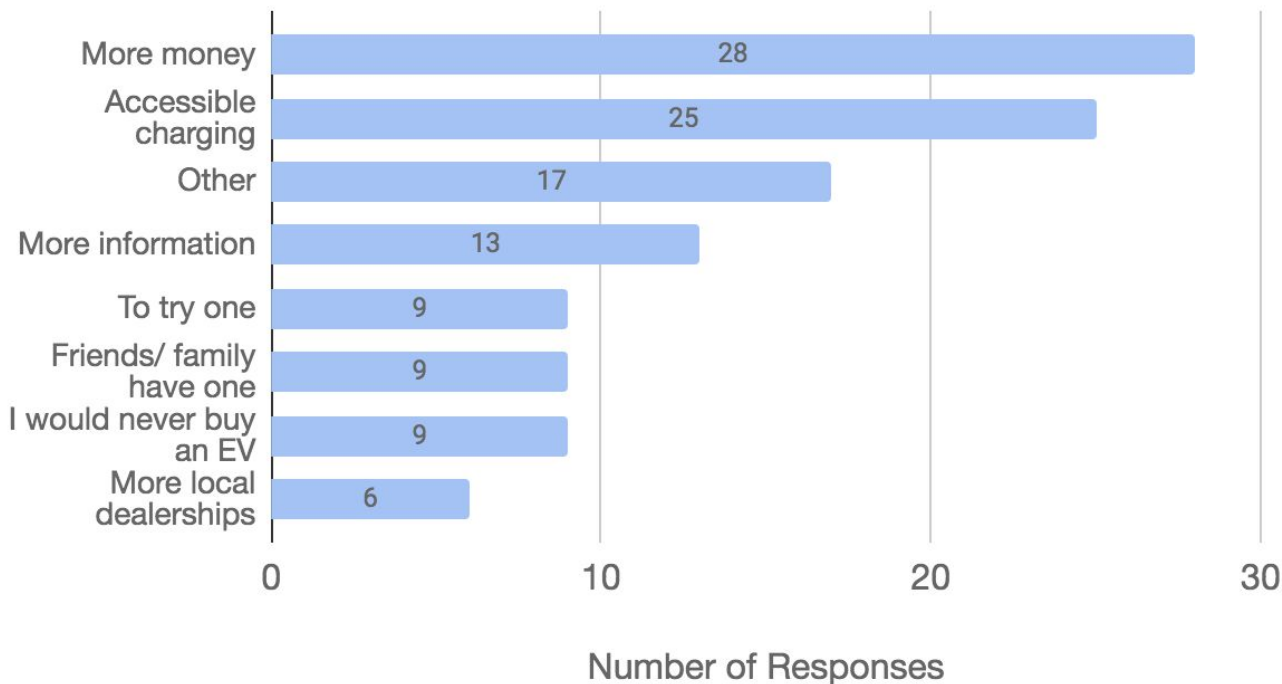
What kind of car do you drive?



For EV/PHEV owners (mostly older adults), the most common brands were Chevrolet, Toyota & Volkswagen, purchased in 2020-2023 in Maine.

What would you need to buy an electric vehicle?

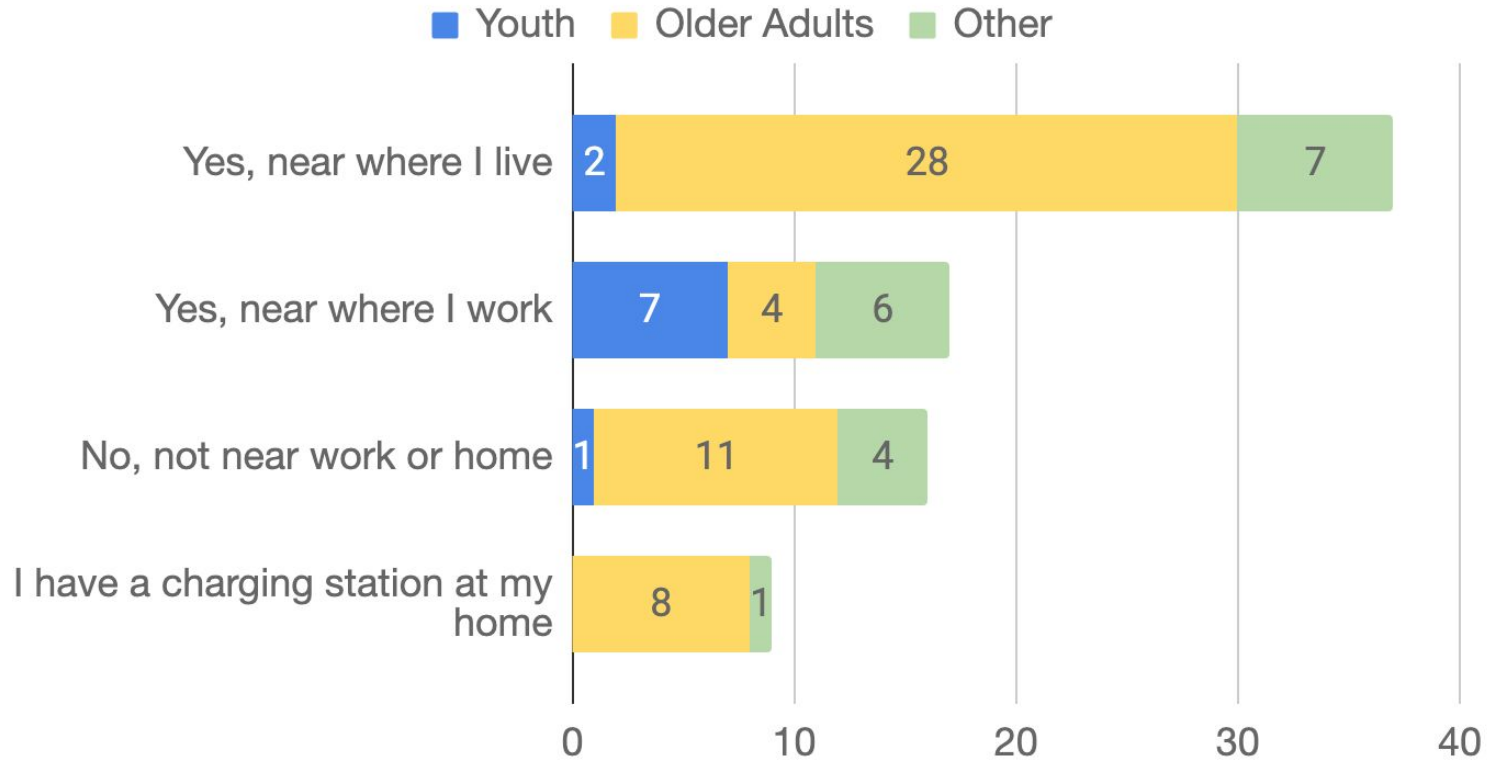
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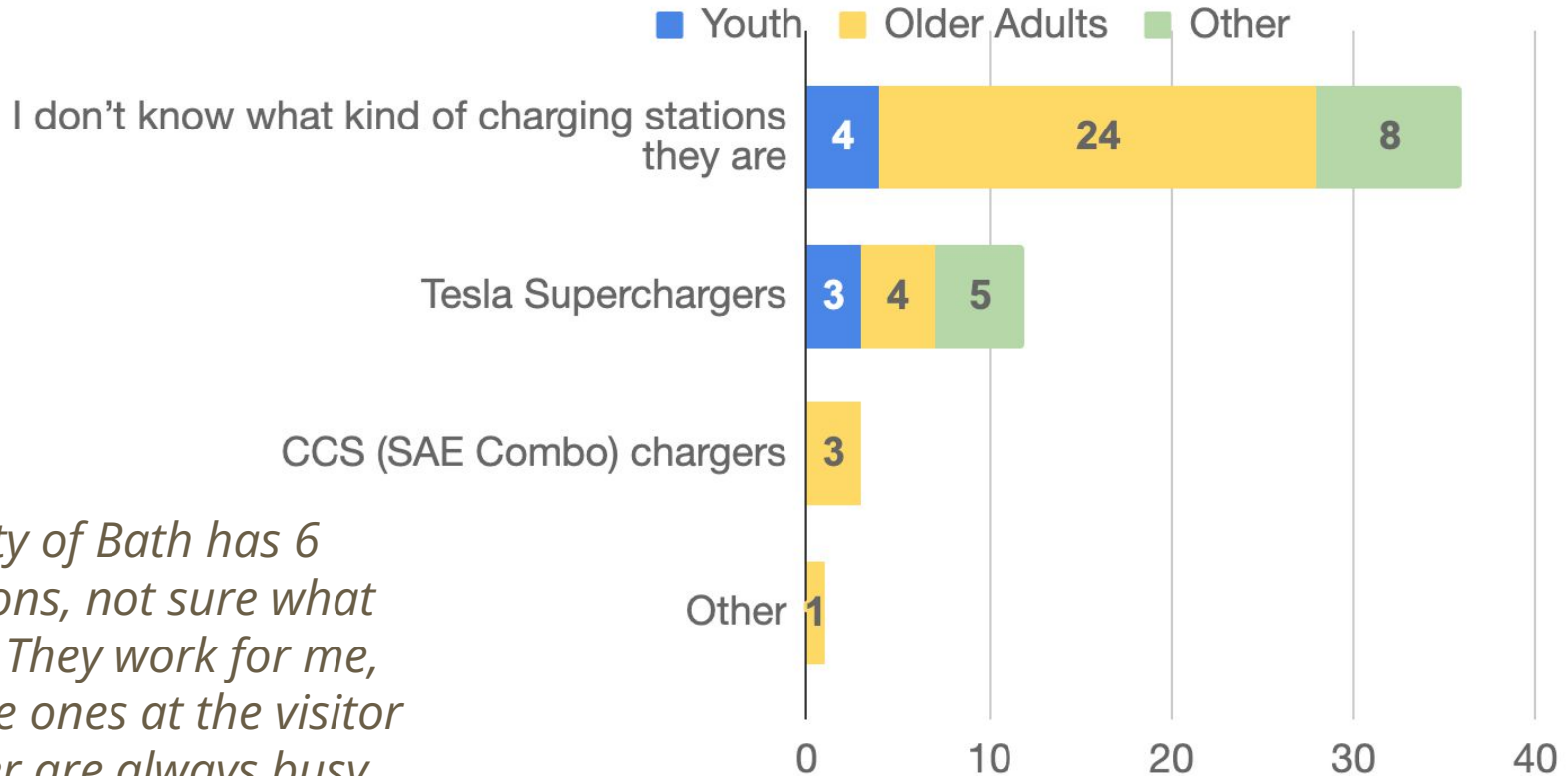
“I’d particularly be interested in a PHEV because we spend a lot of time in Maine where charging infrastructure may be more limited.”

-Older Adult in an Urban Community

Are you aware of any electric vehicle charging stations near where you live and/or work?

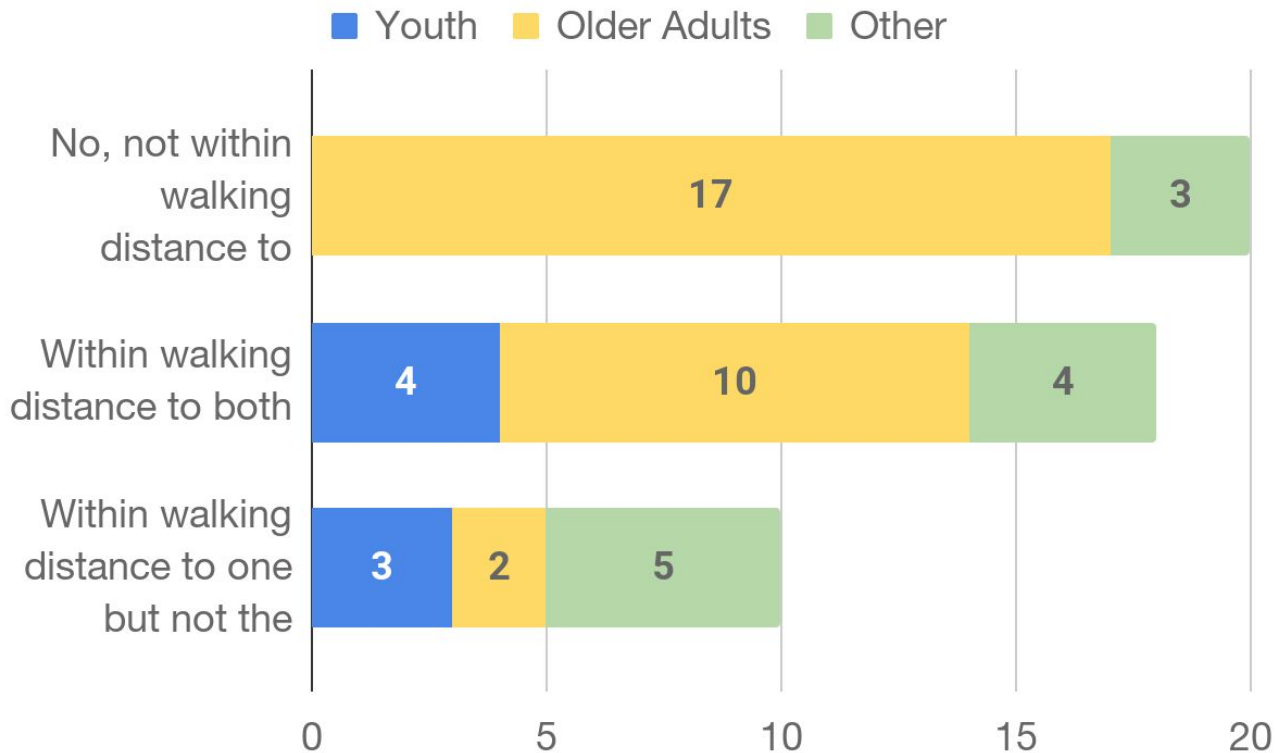


What types of EV charging stations are near you?

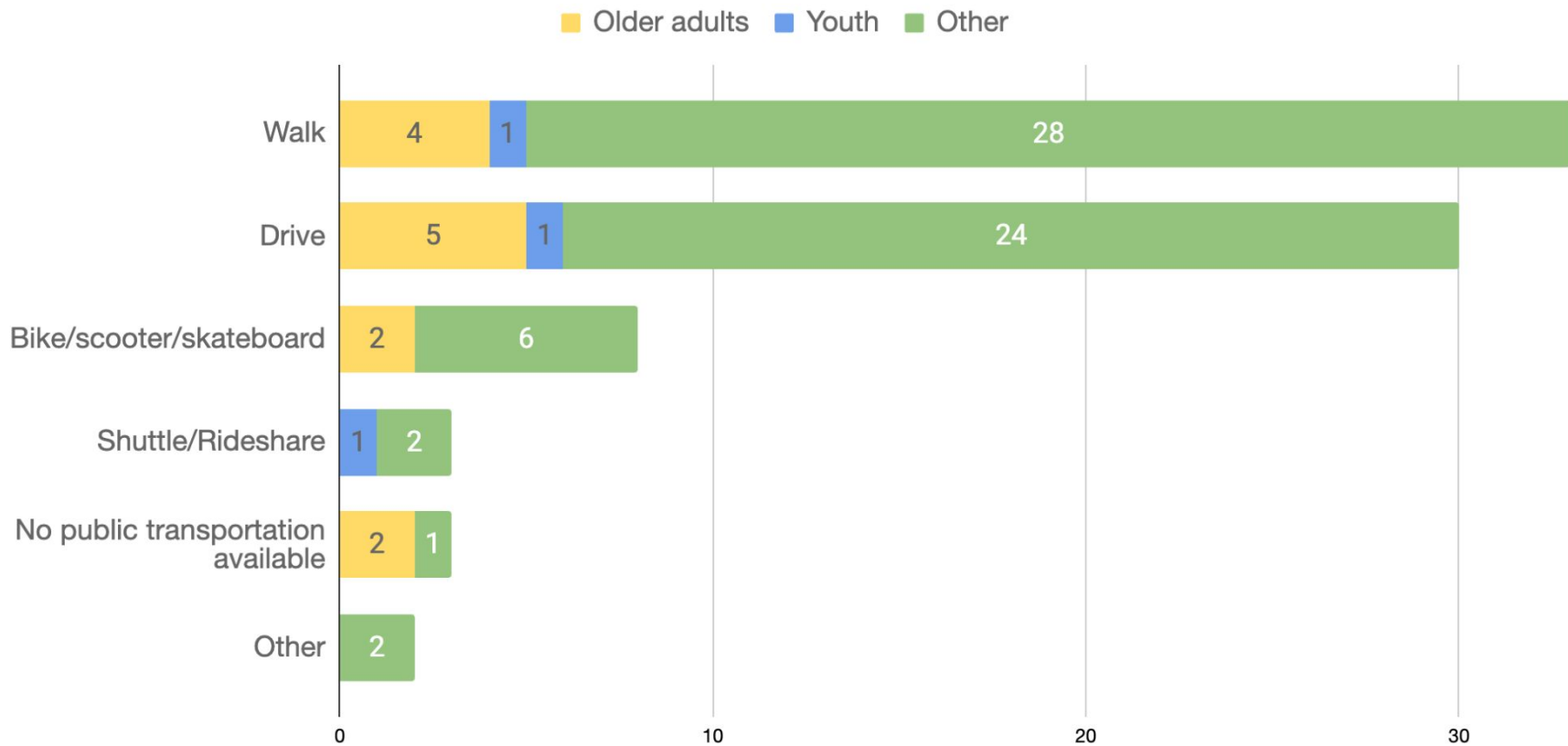


City of Bath has 6 stations, not sure what kind. They work for me, but the ones at the visitor center are always busy.

Do public transportation options stop within walking distance from your home or workplace?

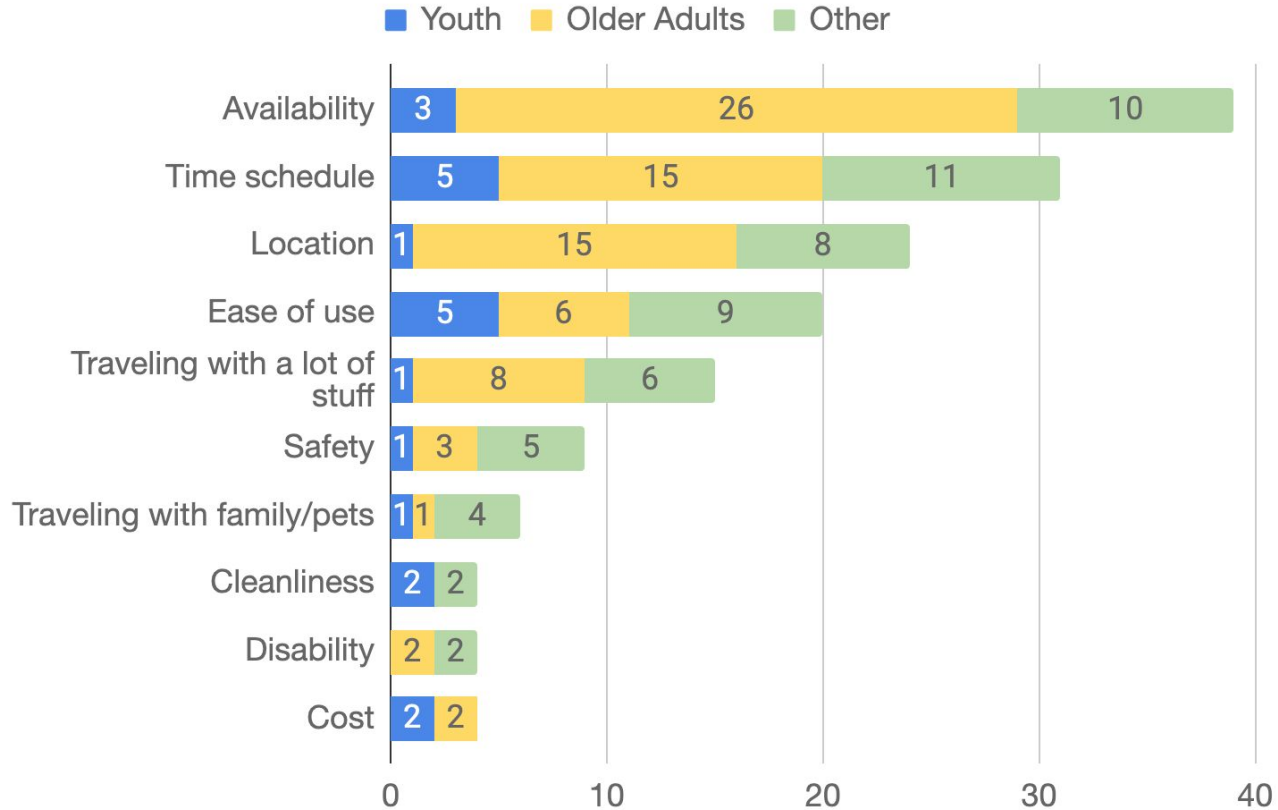


How do you get to and from public transportation stops?

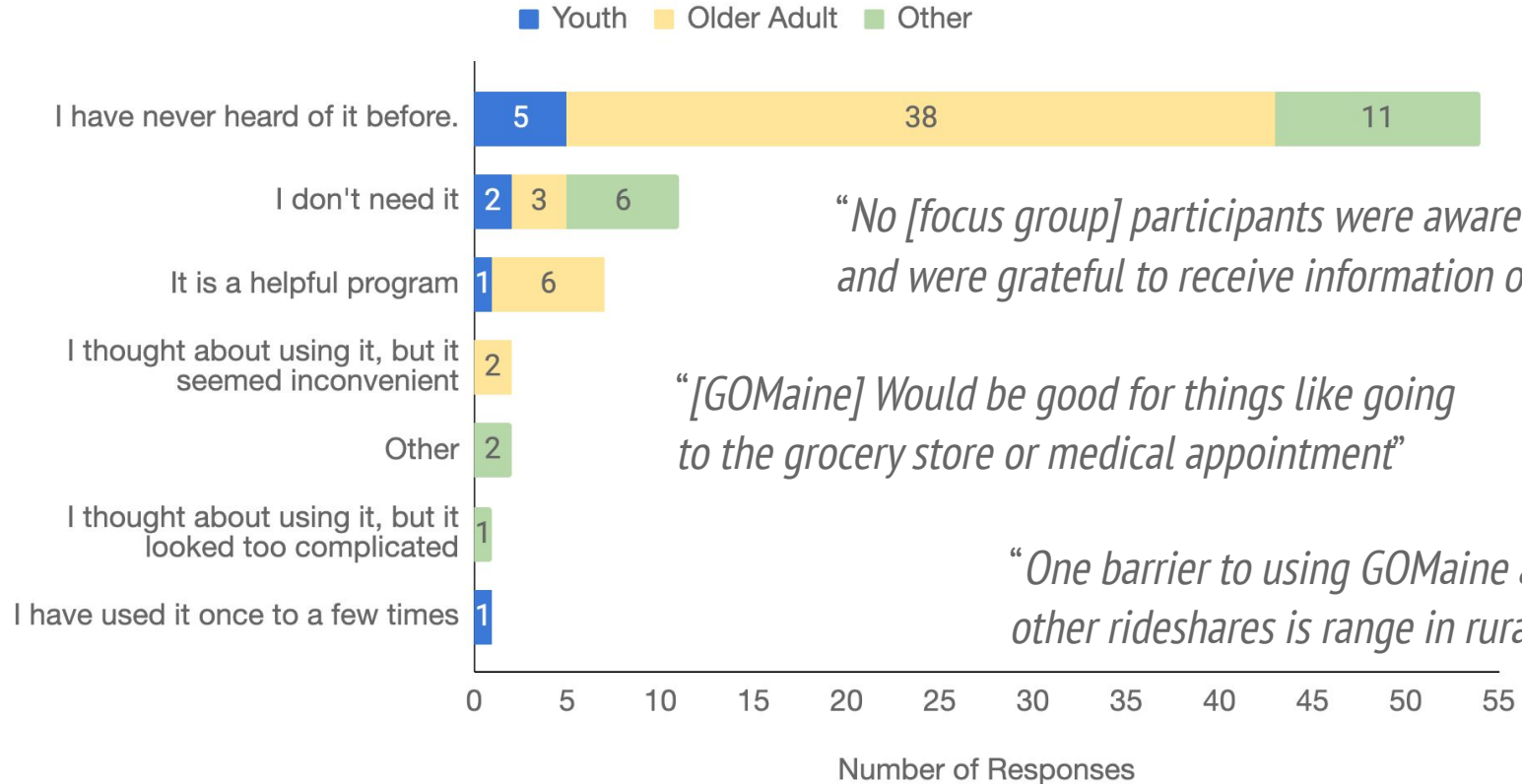


Total respondents: 63

What makes it difficult for you to use public transportation?



GOMaine: the statewide travel resource program



“No [focus group] participants were aware of GOMaine and were grateful to receive information on it.”

“[GOMaine] Would be good for things like going to the grocery store or medical appointment”

“One barrier to using GOMaine and other rideshares is range in rural areas”

We asked survey respondents to review existing programs...

There are multiple financial incentives available for buying an electric vehicle. The following questions ask about these incentives:

U.S. government:

Up to \$7,500 tax credit on **NEW** electric vehicle purchase by people with annual income up to \$300,000

Efficiency Maine:

\$3,000 to \$7,500 discount or rebate on **NEW** electric vehicle purchase by people of **LOW income***

\$2,500 discount or rebate on **USED** electric vehicle purchase by people of **LOW income***

\$2,000 to \$3,500 discount or rebate on **NEW** electric vehicle purchase by people of **MODERATE income** (\$70,000-\$100,000 annual income)

\$1,000 to \$2,000 discount or rebate on **NEW** electric vehicle purchase by people of **ANY income**.

***To prove eligibility for income-based options:** upload a copy of most recent tax return and fill out online [form](#) OR give permission for a qualifying program to verify your eligibility to Efficiency Maine directly (*Home Energy Assistance Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or MaineCare*).

The low end of each range is for **plug-in hybrid electric vehicles** (gas & electric). The high end of each range is for **fully electric vehicles** (only electric).

You get a direct **discount** if you buy a vehicle from one the Participating Dealers on the map below (also listed on Efficiency Maine's [website](#)). You get a **rebate** if you buy or lease directly from the manufacturer. Cars can't cost more than \$50,000. Trucks can't cost more than \$80,000.

...at multiple levels (federal, state, community)

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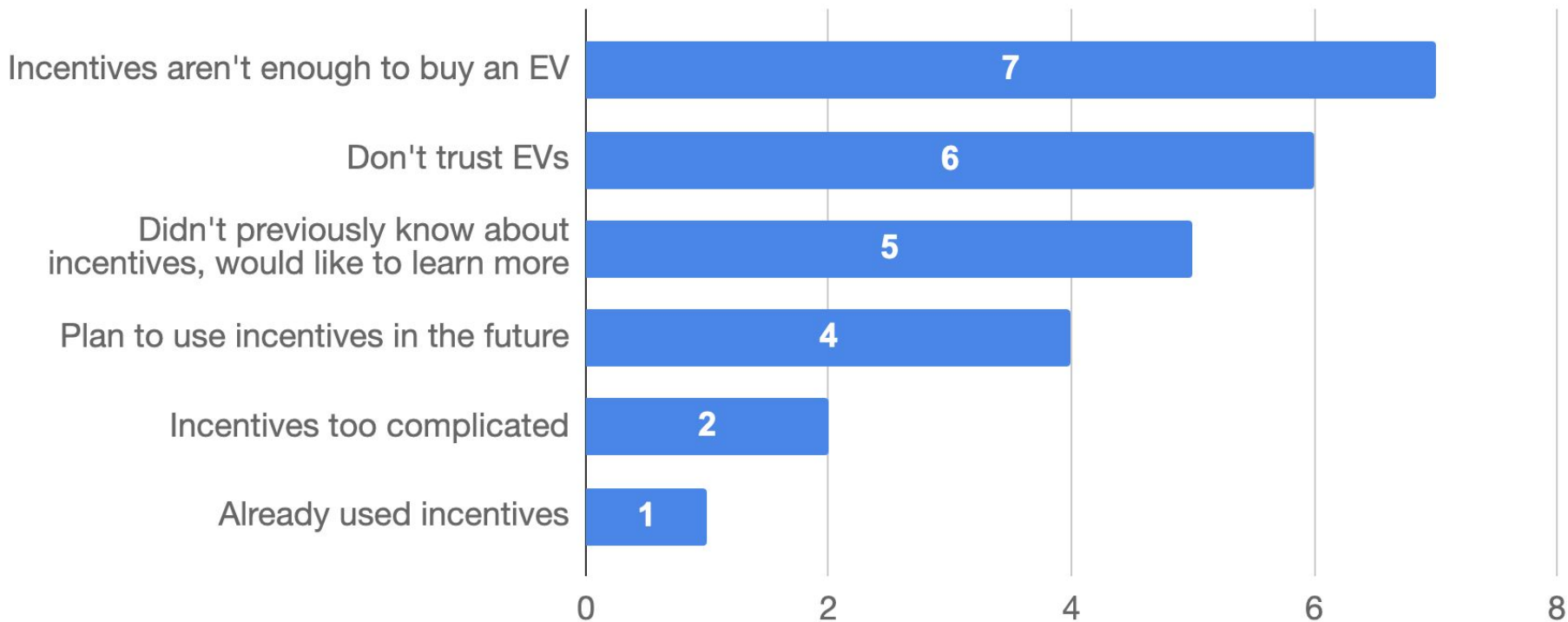
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Map of Participating Dealers



When asked about these incentives...



Strong Feelings About Electric Vehicles

I bought an EV 2 years ago and love it!"

- Older Adult in Maine

54% of survey respondents (20/37) said they would like to see more public charging stations for electric vehicles.

"again to not [assault] the land to mine for lithium and putting the batteries in landfills. you haven't done your homework but I have. Electric in cold regions don't work. Stop pretending this is green - it's black to say the least"

-Older Adult in a Rural Maine Community

"Personally, I struggle to understand how electric vehicles are to save our climate, however they cost way more to make and the EV chargers are taking up additional space on earth."

- Youth

EV adoption and infrastructure are not top priorities in rural communities

“The technology is too new.,There is no way a battery will last for as long/far as I need to travel.,I don't think the battery will hold up in winter weather - I worry about getting stranded somewhere without a charge in a storm,I don't think they are as safe as other vehicles”

-Older Adult in a Rural,
Disadvantaged Maine Community

“Housing itself is the hardest part. Will the state work to make housing more affordable? The question about EV charging stations doesn't seem appropriate when housing prices are such a more immediate concern”

-Working Group Participant

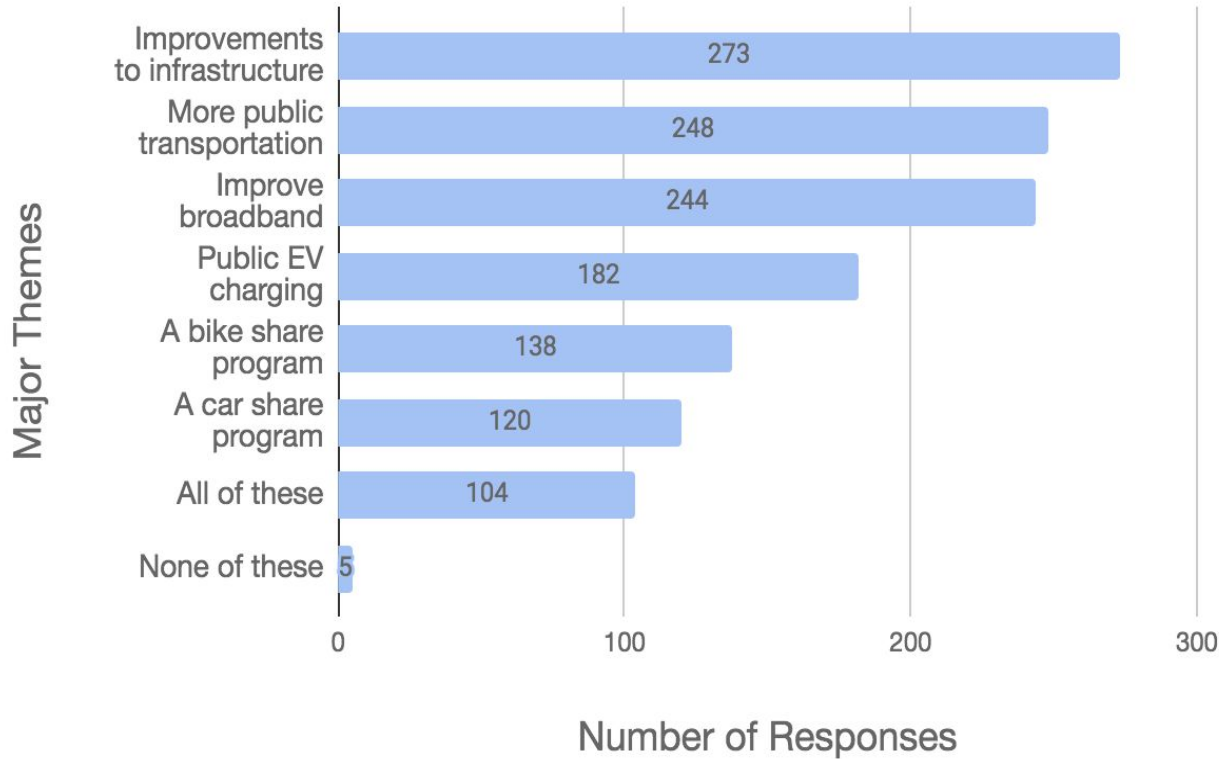
Landlords expressed concerns about alternative energy upgrades (including EV chargers)

“I've investigated alternative energy but can't afford the upfront costs. I was told you get all kinds of money back but then find out it's in the form of a tax rebate and to get the maximum, you have to spend several thousand dollars.”

“Costs are changing over time, but the cost to sell excess as well as future cost for electricity from the grid, so it is difficult to calculate the economic cost or benefit”

“[I do not trust the options or providers/installers because of] Stories of alternative electric providers who end up gouging consumers with higher rates than default electric company rates”

How would you like to see transportation improved?



“Some people in Norway don’t have cars at all - also leads to a food desert issue, shopping at gas stations etc. Get transportation for people’s most immediate needs”

-POC from a rural, underserved community

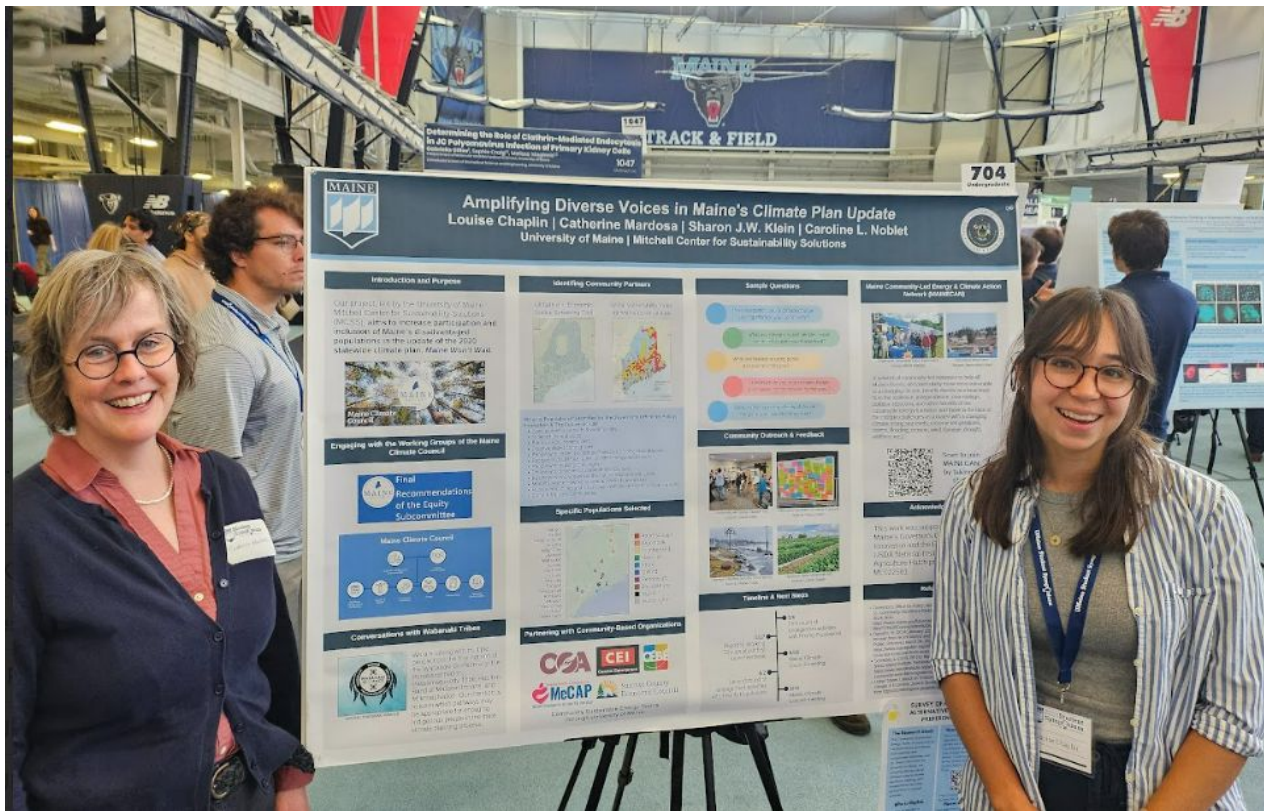


GOOD NEWS: 70% of 352 respondents are open to expanded public transportation

What's next....As you work on your recommendations

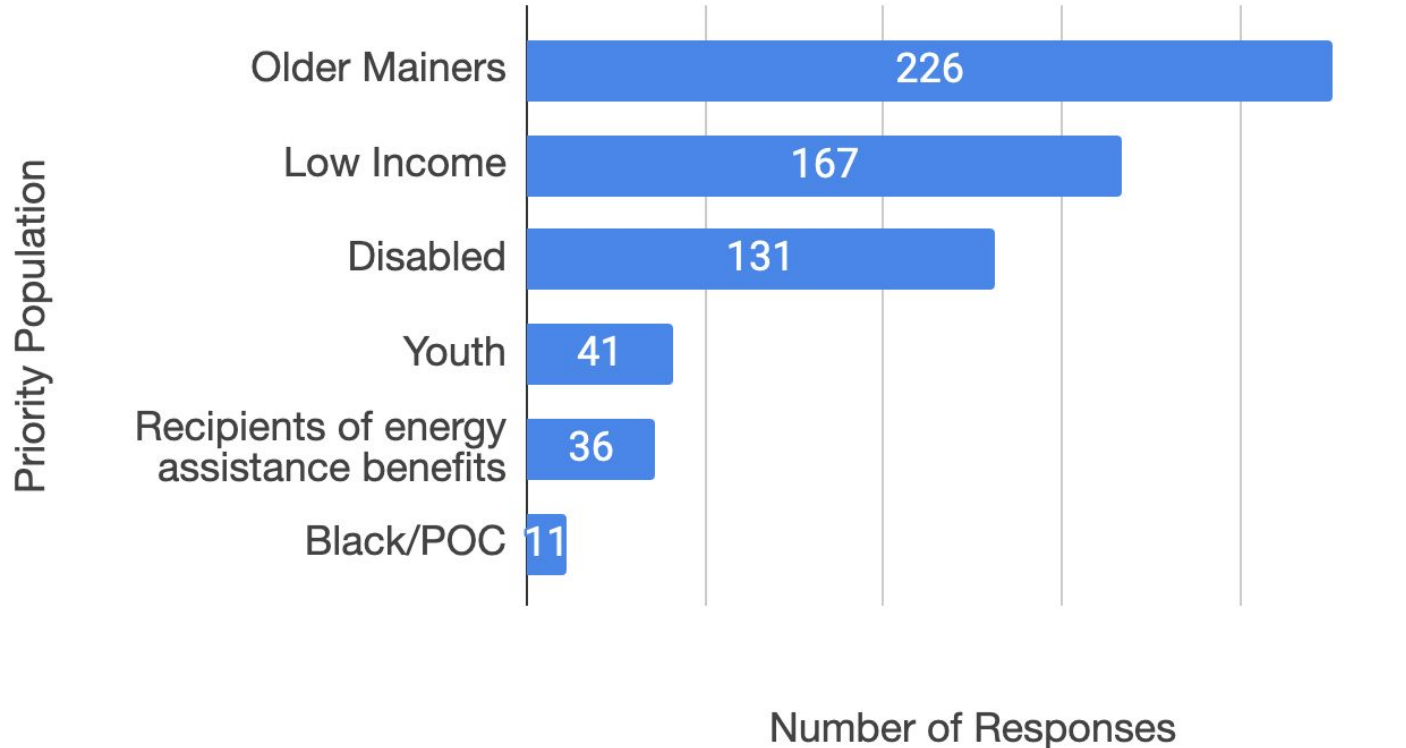
1. Cross-WG Learning: as we do presentations to the next 4 Working Groups next week, GOPIF will share presentations with WG co-chairs
2. How can we be helpful to you? (anything you saw here today that you'd like follow up on?)
3. Second round of engagement activities -- Summer 2024
 - a. Are there groups you really need to hear from, or hear more from?

Thank you!

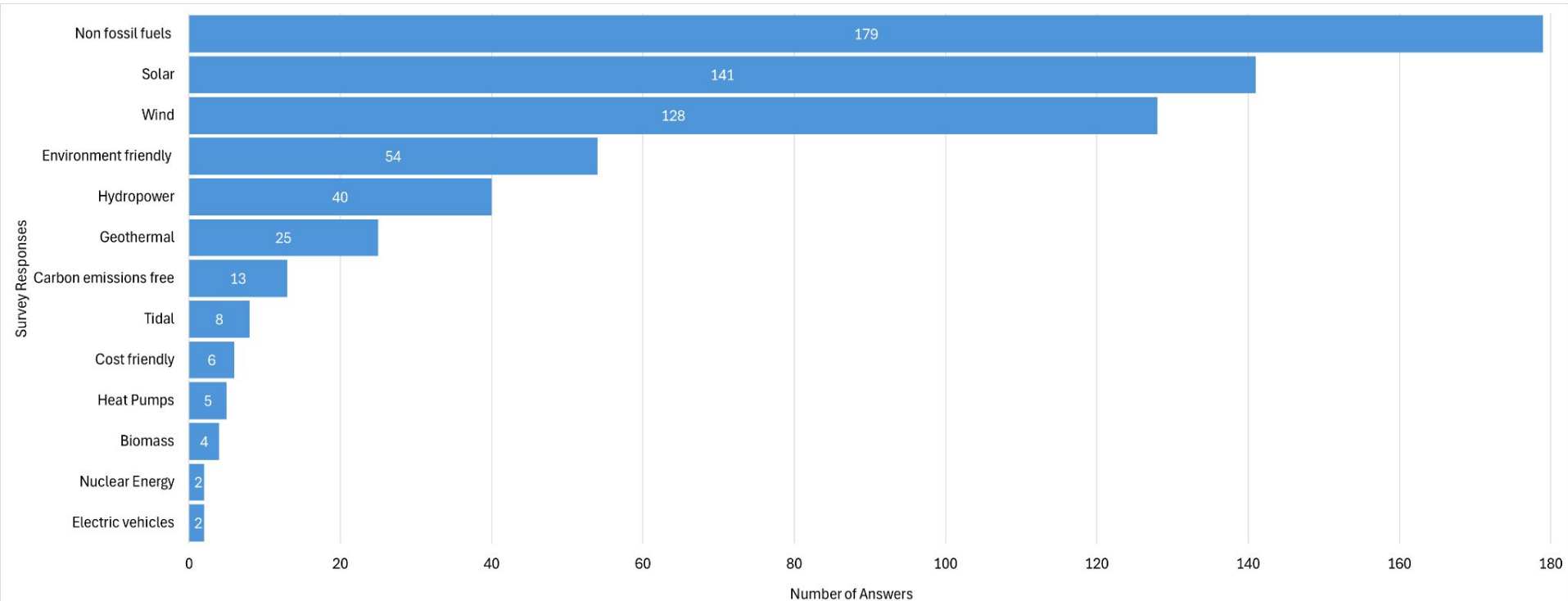


Appendix 1: Who responded to our survey?

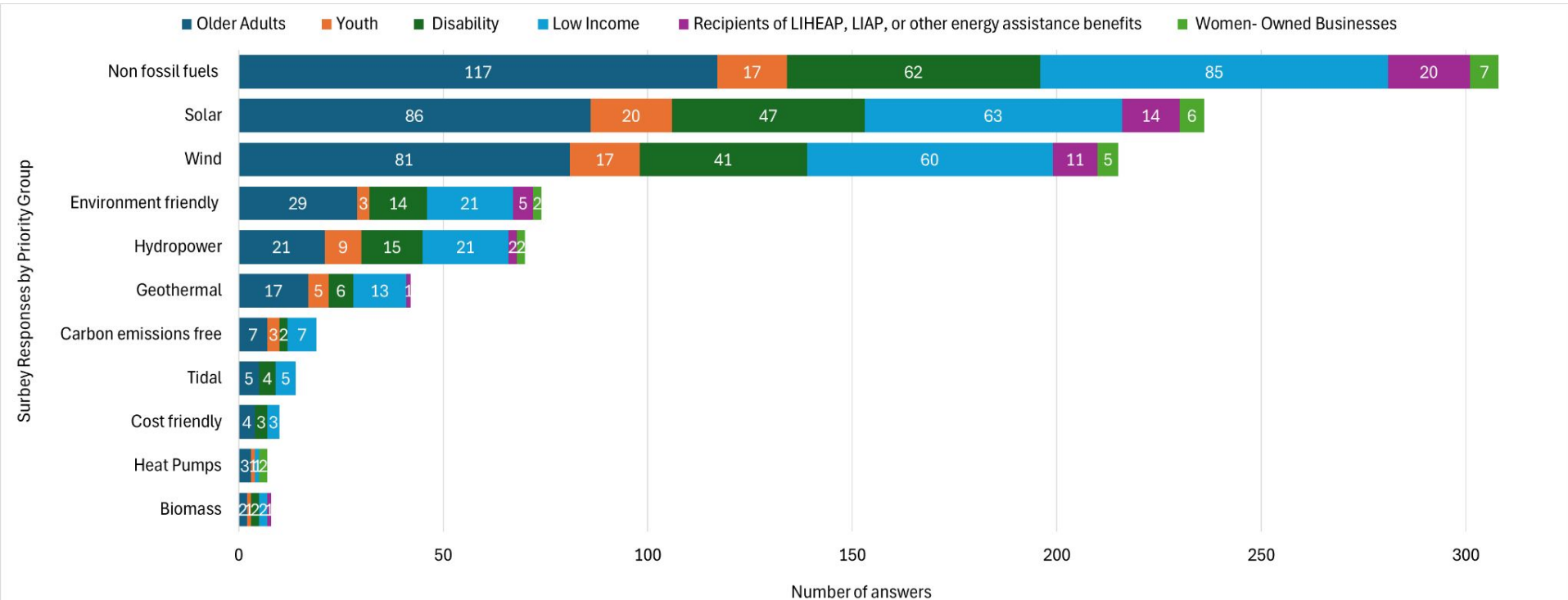
Priority Population Survey Responses



Appendix 2: What do the terms "alternative energy" and "renewable energy" mean to you??

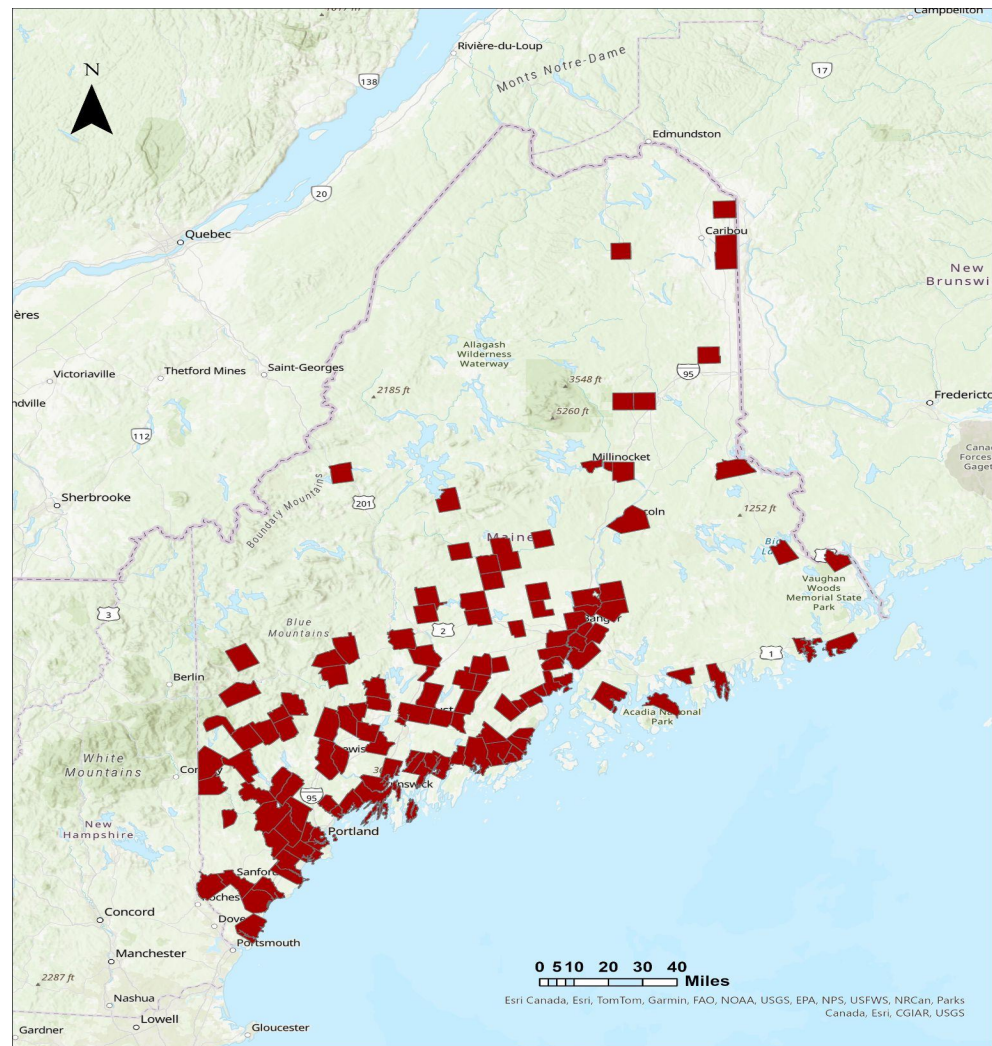


Appendix 3: What do the terms "alternative energy" and "renewable energy" mean to you??



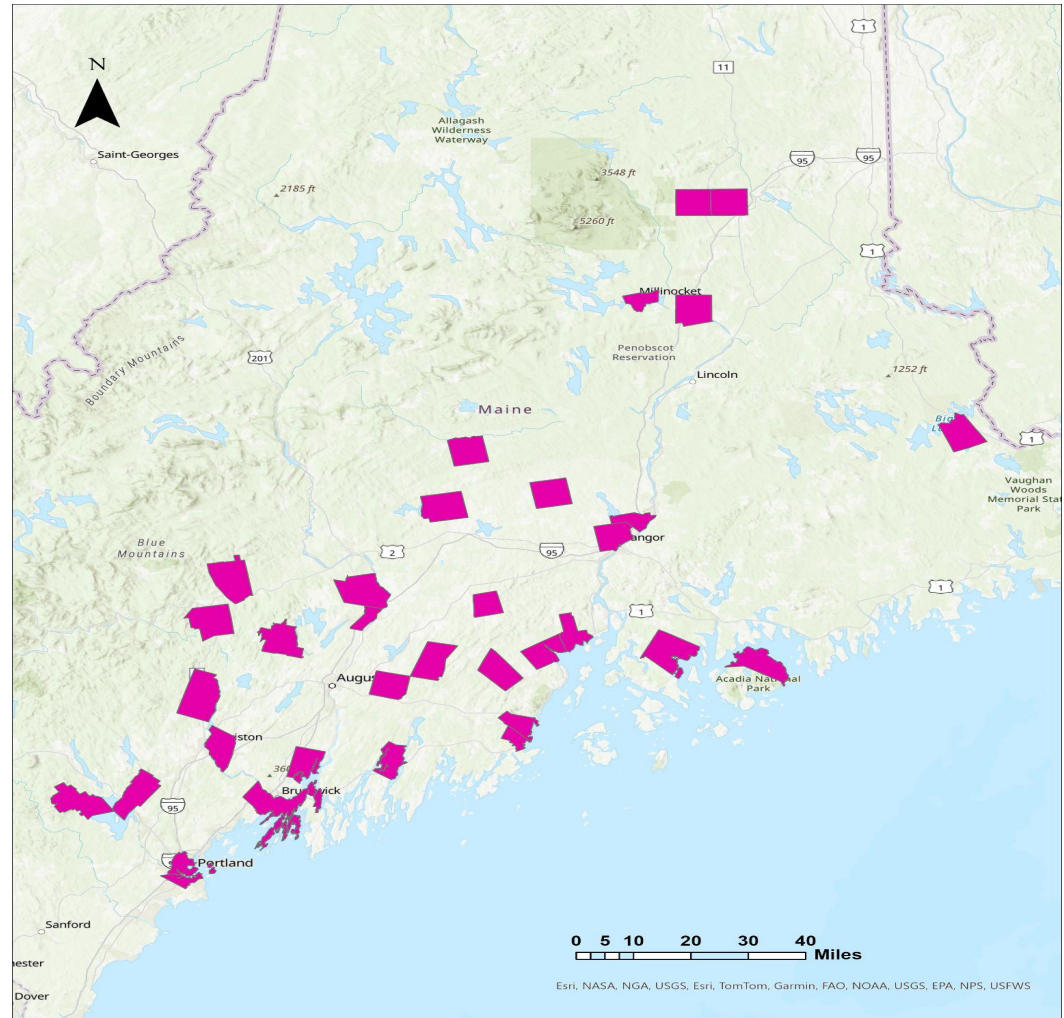
Priority Population

- Community members from each of these communities participated in our survey



Priority Population

- Members of these disadvantaged communities filled out the survey for the Transportation block on Community survey



What types of public transportation exist near you/you use?

