

Buildings, Infrastructure & Housing (BIH) Working Group

Proposed Recommendations and Actions

DRAFT / For discussion only

Updated 4/11/24

Proposed recommendations resulting from BIH WG discussions to date:

RECOMMENDATION	ACTIONS
<p>Continue the progress of weatherization and heating systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and extend funding and financing • Encourage and expand education, outreach, and technical support for programs that increase uptake of weatherization and clean heating systems • Increase access for renters, low-income, and rural residents • PUT TARGETS HERE FOR HEAT PUMPS AND WEATHERIZATION - TBD
<p>Establish strong systems and processes to support rapid adoption and compliance with increasingly climate-smart building codes and standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerate adoption of and compliance with increasingly more climate-smart building codes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Move building code adoption and enforcement to the new Office of Community Affairs ○ Increase funding and identify best practices for training of contractors and code enforcement officers • <i>Also discussed:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider amending state law to require that we not be more than one version behind current IECC code ○ Licensing: Explore the potential of contractor licensing to accelerate adoption of and compliance with increasingly climate-smart building codes. ○ End exemptions: Eliminating the exemptions for enforcing code. • Other language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage new federal standards and voluntary certifications to go “above and beyond” Maine building codes (following the lead of MSHA, possibly to include: all publicly-funded buildings, mobile homes) • Track the trajectory of IECC codes toward net-zero targets (for some or all segments) and determine which sectors might lead a more rapid transition • Explore zero-emission building equipment standards • Something that addresses resiliency aspects of new construction (March 8 convo)

<p>Promote the manufacture and use of climate-friendly building products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address the barriers for attracting a CLT plant and other future bio-based materials manufacturing in Maine. • Increase awareness / educate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shift climate action focus to include both operational and embodied carbon ○ Provide technical assistance to municipalities and larger institutional projects specifically on these issues (via Community Resilience Partnership?) ○ Contractor licensing can help (link to other mention in our recommendations.) • Seek funding to bridge the current gap between high-embodied carbon (ie steel & cement) and low-embodied (ie wood and bioproducts). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demonstration projects (inspired by Mass Timber Accelerator) ○ Support Maine firms to produce Environmental Product Declarations • Require whole life carbon accounting for buildings over a certain size, particularly buildings with state funding. • Incentivize, through the Historic Preservation Tax Credit and other sources, keeping old buildings that have large amounts of embodied carbon – avoid tearing those building down. • Incentivize low-carbon materials in retrofitting, avoid encouraging the use of high-carbon materials, such as foam insulation, in existing and future incentive programs.
<p>Support measures that both reduce carbon and improve resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support distributed energy resources, such as solar and storage (including electric vehicle batteries) • Manage the impact of building loads on the grid (link to demand management recommendations) <p>Also discussed regarding resilience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call-out: how do we support homeowners in flooding basements: drainage, insulation • Resilience as a changing/evolving concept, economic resilience • Need to prepare for forest fires in Maine (because we are getting less snow, drier, and windier conditions) • Tax policy and energy policy to help with home repair • Buildings near coast: how will we deal with that? • Safe spaces for communities if houses are destroyed or damaged.

Reduce emissions from industrial sources and make them more competitive	In progress Potential language: With the shared goal of supporting a clean future for industrial facilities in Maine, evaluate the feasibility and/or barriers to transitioning Maine's existing industrial energy users to electricity or clean non-fossil derived fuels.
Continue to lead by example in publicly-funded buildings	Leave as is?

DRAFT