

Land-Use Related Components of *Maine Won't Wait*

Land use recommendations and actions were referenced in *Maine Won't Wait; A Four-Year Plan for Climate Action* (2020) as summarized below. These provide a starting place for land-use conversations during the 2024 update of the state's Climate Action Plan.

Strategy A: Embrace the Future of Transportation in Maine

Strategy A.3: Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) (*Maine Won't Wait*, page 44-45)

- Action: Reduce light-duty VMT over time, achieving 10% reductions by 2025 and 20% by 2030.
- Action: By 2024, establish state coordination, strengthen land-use policies, and use state grant programs to encourage development that supports the reduction of VMT.
- Supporting language from *Maine Won't Wait*:
 - Transportation emissions can be reduced when commuting is reduced. Developing strategies that locate schools, workplaces, and shopping opportunities near where people live will reduce the need for driving.
 - Supporting development in Maine's village centers, cities, or rural crossroads would require effective local, regional, and state land-use policies and would include encouraging state capital investments such as affordable housing and schools, and safe pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure in these areas.

Strategy E: Protect Maine's Environment and Working Lands and Waters: Promote Natural Climate Solutions and Increase Carbon Sequestration

Strategy E.1: Protect Natural and Working Lands and Waters (*Maine Won't Wait*, page 76-77)

- Action: Increase by 2030 the total acreage of conserved lands in the state to 30% through voluntary, focused purchases of land and working forest or farm conservation easements.
- Action: Develop policies by 2022 to ensure renewable energy project siting is streamlined and transparent while seeking to minimize impacts on natural and working lands and engaging key stakeholders.
- Supporting language from *Maine Won't Wait*:
 - Conserving forests and farmland through conservation easements is one of the more cost-effective strategies to help reach carbon neutrality by maintaining forest cover and ensuring the lands will be available for future forest and farmland ecosystem services.
 - Additional attention needs to be focused on policies to ensure renewable-energy project siting is streamlined, transparent, and thoughtfully balances potential impacts on working land, engaging key stakeholders.

Strategy F: Build Health and Resilient Communities

- Strategy F.3: Emphasize Resilience Through Land-Use Planning and Legal Tools (*Maine Won't Wait*, page 87)
 - Action: Develop and implement updated land-use regulations, laws, and practices by 2024 in order to enhance community resilience to flooding and other climate impacts.
 - Supporting language from *Maine Won't Wait*:

- The state should promote regional collaboration among towns and offer technical assistance, funding, updated land-use planning, as well as expanded public-health efforts.
- An update of land-use laws and practices will give communities the tools they need to build resilience, enhance ecosystem services, and get out of harm's way.
- The state should lead a process to update Maine's land use laws, tools, and practices to address the threats communities face from climate-change impacts.

Land Use (excerpt under Strategy F, page 89)

By 2024, Maine will have convened stakeholder processes to make specific recommendations for changes in state regulations on the following land-use issues.

Land use emerged as an important issue throughout the Climate Planning Process. Maine needs to meet both the imperative to reduce carbon emissions and the duty to protect people and infrastructure from harm. In addition to addressing sea-level rise, there are several topics in the Maine Climate Action Plan that require continued stakeholder processes to address. They include:

- **CLEAN-ENERGY SITING:** Maine should continue to work to achieve its ambitious renewable energy goals while balancing protection of our natural resources, seeking siting that has the least impact on prime agriculture lands, and fishing and marine industries.
- **LAND-USE PRACTICES:** Maine should encourage and incentivize climate-friendly local land-use policies that promote convenient, walkable, and bikeable communities and reduce the need for driving and commuting. Complete streets, mixed use, and housing density in downtowns and village areas are potential considerations for reducing vehicle miles traveled.
- **COMMUNITY FLOOD-RISK REDUCTION:** Maine should develop guidance to support flood risk reductions for communities and state infrastructure. Long-term planning for sea-level rise and riverine flooding should help equitably locate or relocate development in safer areas.
- **ANTICIPATING GROWTH:** Maine should anticipate the potential for growth, development, and economic opportunity as people migrate to Maine seeking refuge from severe climate impacts affecting other parts of the country.