

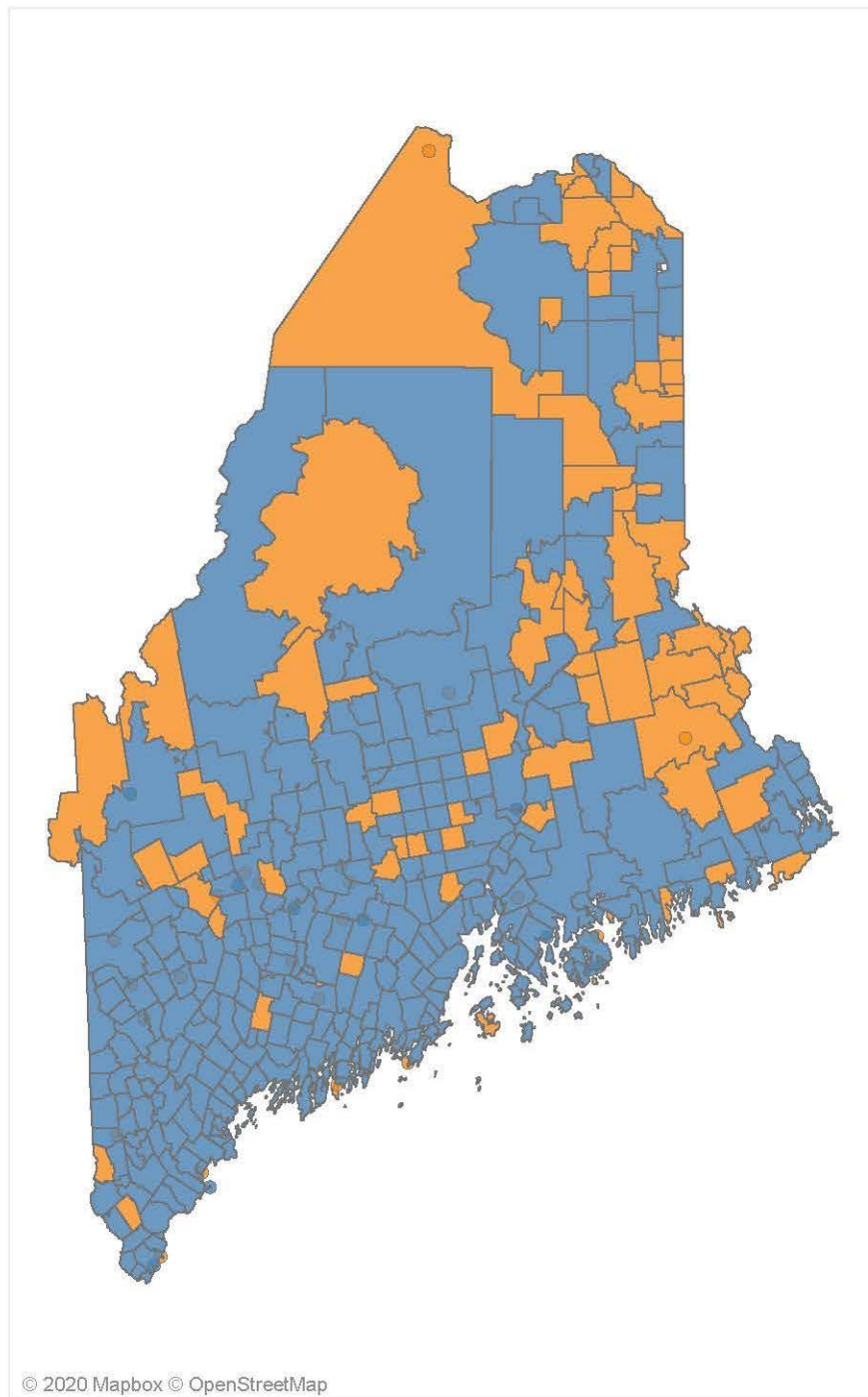
# Maine Climate Council Public Input Survey Summary

September 2020

This report presents a summary of the public input surveys conducted over the summer. More than 4,400 individuals provided input through feedback surveys on the website, [climatecouncil.maine.gov](https://climatecouncil.maine.gov). Members of the public were invited to learn about the impacts of climate change on the State, read the strategies recommended by the working groups, and provide feedback through a series of short surveys. Numerous organizations helped amplify the message, and staff conducted more than twenty outreach presentations this summer. Residents from more than half of Maine communities submitted comments. The public input survey effort built on the stakeholder engagement conducted as part of working group process to develop the draft recommendations, which was conducted via public meetings, calls, surveys, and individual and organizational input.

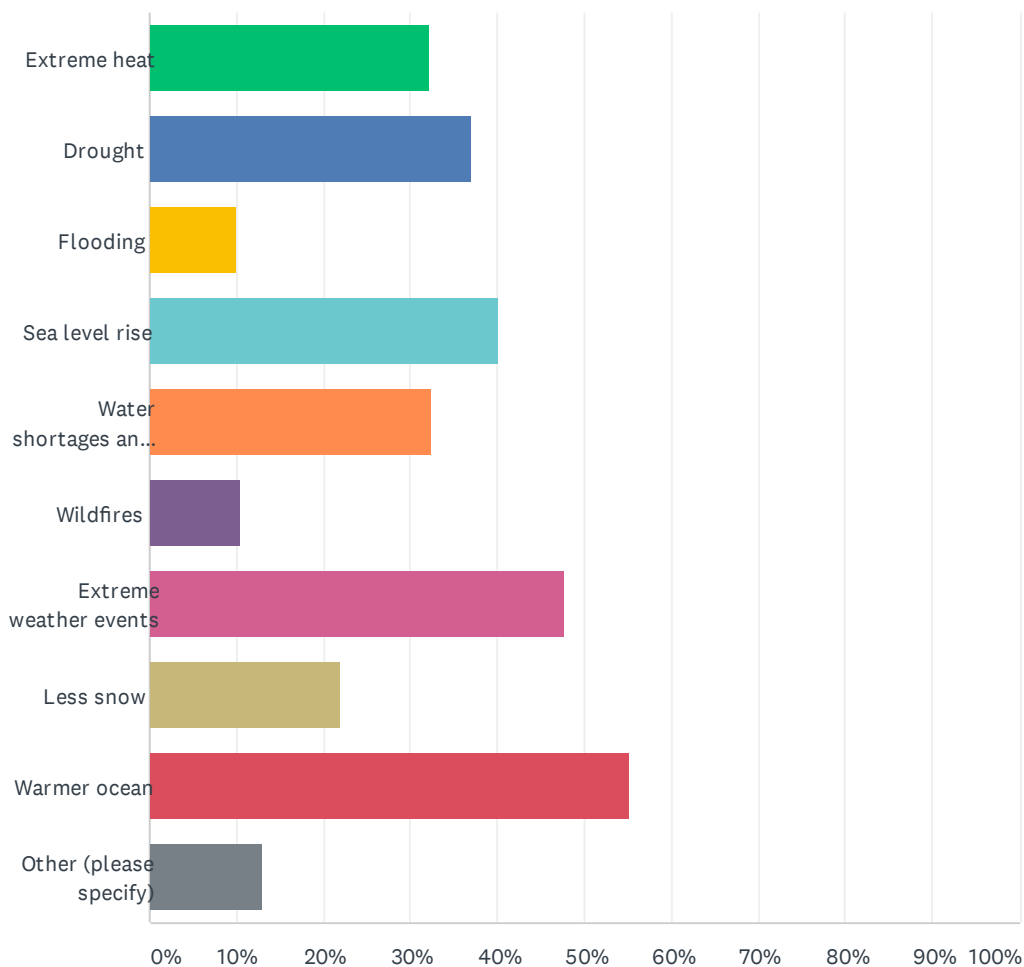
# Maine Climate Council Survey Report

The surveys received 4,440 total responses. Respondents included residents of 74% of Maine zip codes.



### Q3 What potential climate change risks to your community concern you the most? Please pick the top three that most concern you.

Answered: 845 Skipped: 0

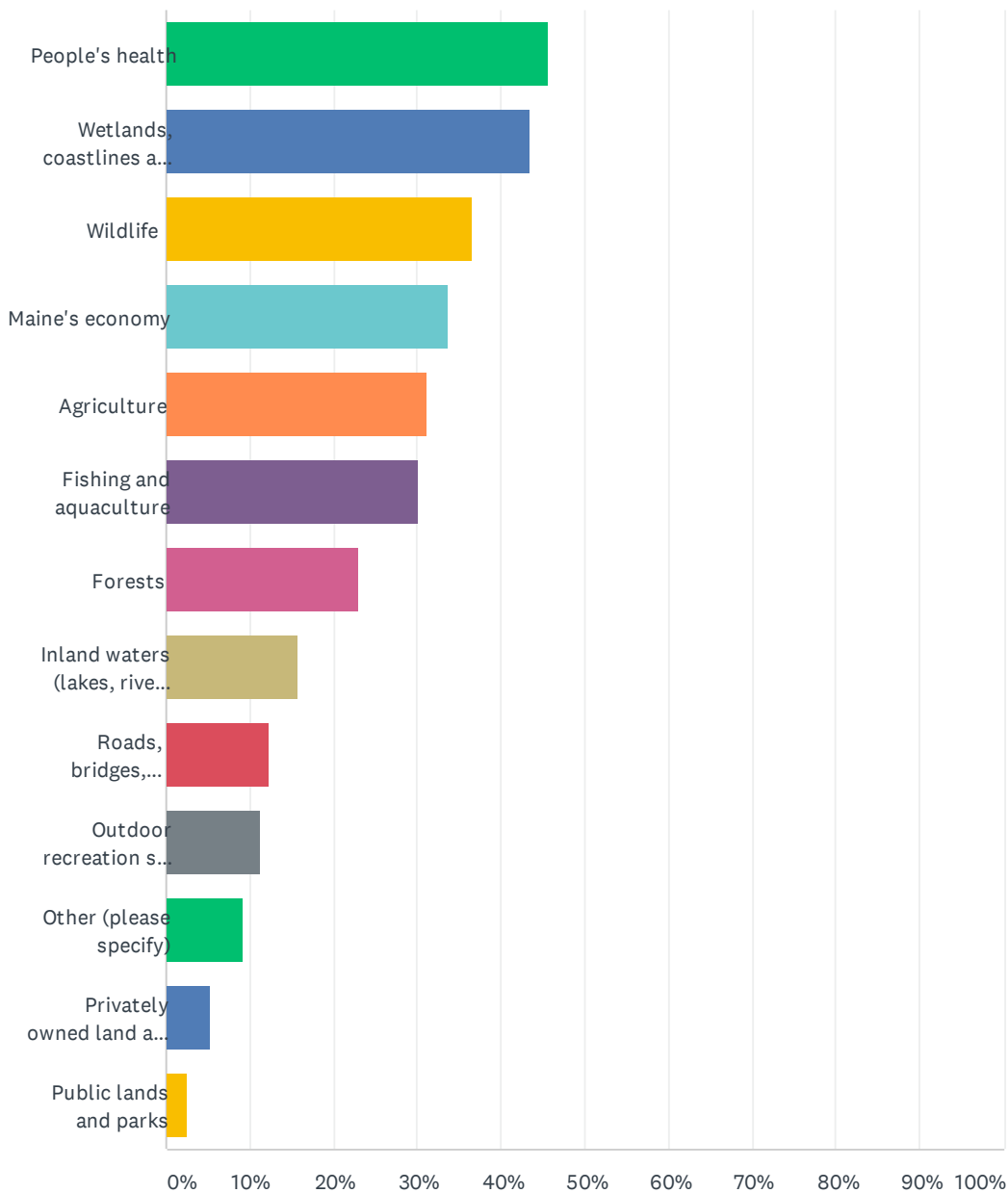


# Maine Climate Council Survey

| ANSWER CHOICES                    | RESPONSES |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----|
| Extreme heat                      | 32.31%    | 273 |
| Drought                           | 37.04%    | 313 |
| Flooding                          | 9.94%     | 84  |
| Sea level rise                    | 40.12%    | 339 |
| Water shortages and water quality | 32.43%    | 274 |
| Wildfires                         | 10.53%    | 89  |
| Extreme weather events            | 47.69%    | 403 |
| Less snow                         | 21.89%    | 185 |
| Warmer ocean                      | 55.15%    | 466 |
| Other (please specify)            | 12.90%    | 109 |
| Total Respondents: 845            |           |     |

# Q4 What aspects of your community are you most concerned will be harmed by climate change? Please pick the top three that most concern you.

Answered: 845 Skipped: 0

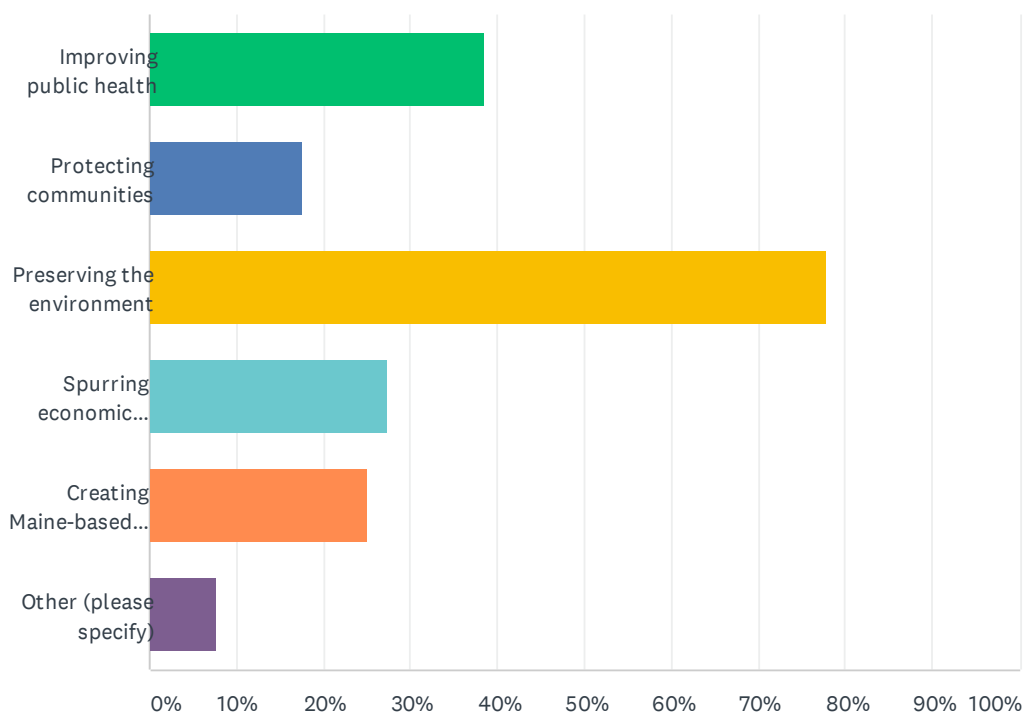


# Maine Climate Council Survey

| ANSWER CHOICES  | RESPONSES |     |
|---|-----------|-----|
| People's health   | 45.56%    | 385 |
| Wetlands, coastlines and intertidal zones                       | 43.43%    | 367 |
| Wildlife  | 36.57%    | 309 |
| Maine's economy   | 33.61%    | 284 |
| Agriculture   | 31.24%    | 264 |
| Fishing and aquaculture   | 30.06%    | 254 |
| Forests   | 22.96%    | 194 |
| Inland waters (lakes, rivers, streams)                          | 15.74%    | 133 |
| Roads, bridges, wharfs, and public buildings                    | 12.31%    | 104 |
| Outdoor recreation such as skiing, hiking, hunting, and fishing | 11.36%    | 96  |
| Other (please specify)  | 9.23%     | 78  |
| Privately owned land and buildings                              | 5.33%     | 45  |
| Public lands and parks  | 2.60%     | 22  |
| Total Respondents: 845  |           |     |

**Q5 Many of the strategies being considered by the Maine Climate Council to address climate change have other benefits as well. Which of these additional benefits are most important to you? (Select up to two options)**

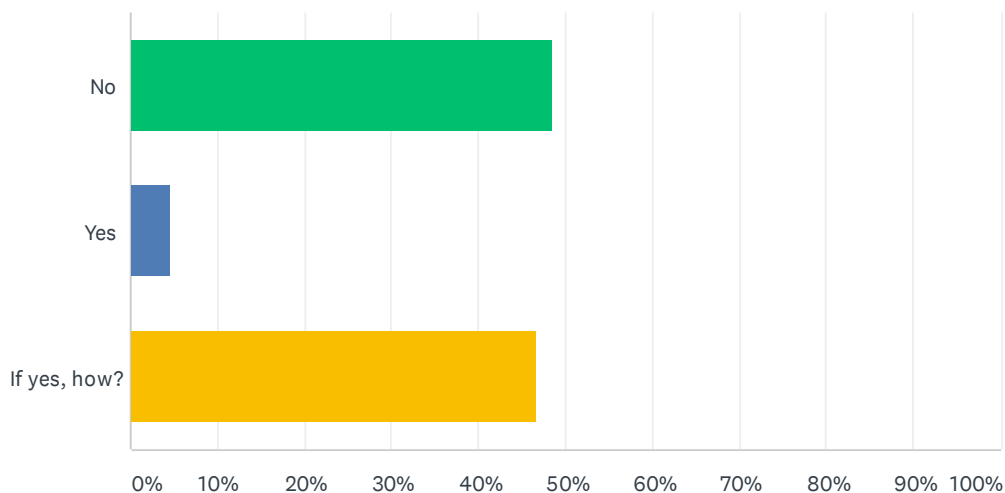
Answered: 845 Skipped: 0



| ANSWER CHOICES               | RESPONSES |     |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----|
| Improving public health      | 38.46%    | 325 |
| Protecting communities       | 17.51%    | 148 |
| Preserving the environment   | 77.87%    | 658 |
| Spurring economic innovation | 27.46%    | 232 |
| Creating Maine-based jobs    | 25.21%    | 213 |
| Other (please specify)       | 7.69%     | 65  |
| Total Respondents: 845       |           |     |

## Q6 Have recent global and national events changed your perspective on climate change?

Answered: 845 Skipped: 0

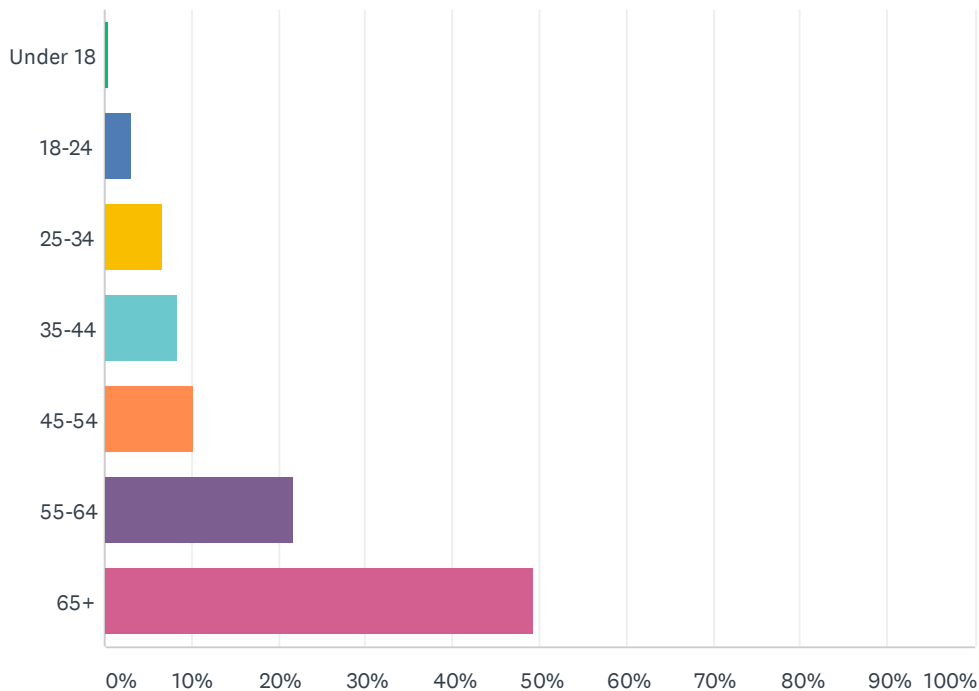


| ANSWER CHOICES |  | RESPONSES |     |
|----------------|--|-----------|-----|
| No             |  | 48.64%    | 411 |
| Yes            |  | 4.62%     | 39  |
| If yes, how?   |  | 46.75%    | 395 |
| TOTAL          |  |           | 845 |



## Q10 What is your age range?

Answered: 840 Skipped: 5



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |     |
|----------------|-----------|-----|
| Under 18       | 0.36%     | 3   |
| 18-24          | 3.10%     | 26  |
| 25-34          | 6.67%     | 56  |
| 35-44          | 8.45%     | 71  |
| 45-54          | 10.24%    | 86  |
| 55-64          | 21.79%    | 183 |
| 65+            | 49.40%    | 415 |
| TOTAL          |           | 840 |

## Buildings, Infrastructure, and Housing Working Group Survey Report

### Overview

The survey for the Buildings, Infrastructure, and Housing Working Group recommendations received 582 responses, third most among the working groups. Survey respondents as well indicated they were directed to the survey from a broad array of sources.

### Observations

Responses to the draft strategies were largely supportive, with a majority of the six strategies deemed a “great fit” for their community by at least 56 percent of respondents.

In the open comments, many respondents indicated retrofitting existing buildings was a more pressing need in their community than new construction.

- *“The first priority should be weatherization of existing housing (or replacement of unsuitable mobile homes). Encouragement of weatherization and switch to energy efficient water heating and heating in group housing for older people and low income people should be high priority. Increased subsidies will be needed . Good idea to link subsidy to doing weatherization and heat pump for example.”*
- *“Improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings is also a great idea, but this strategy could benefit from more emphasis on whole-building, deep energy retrofits. Last year, Boston's Green Ribbon Commission produced a report, "Carbon Free Boston," on achieving Boston's goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. An urban environment is obviously different from a more rural one, but both settings are characterized by a lot of older housing stock. Their approach is worth repeating.”*
- *“Gardiner does not seem to have a ton of space for new development but adding homes represent large energy losses and retrofitting these homes vs rebuilding may be the most efficient use of resources in our community.”*

“Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from industrial processes” was deemed a “great fit” for their community by fewer than half of respondents, the lowest among the strategies. This strategy also had a high number of “neutral” responses.

Looking at the open field comments, the “neutral” responses seem to stem from respondents saying their communities lack industry.

- *“I live in a midcoast town which is practically a retirement community, no industry .*
- *“I live on an island (Islesboro). There's no industry and not all that much construction”*
- *“I marked the final 2 choices as "neutral" because I don't think our community has significant industrial processes and certainly can't modernize the grid by itself..”*
- *“There are no local ‘industrial processes’ to speak of. Any strategy that would work will require the development of local leadership. Is that part of any of these strategies?”*
- *“unclear what "your community" refers to. My town? county? state? No industrial processes in my town...so chose neutral.”*

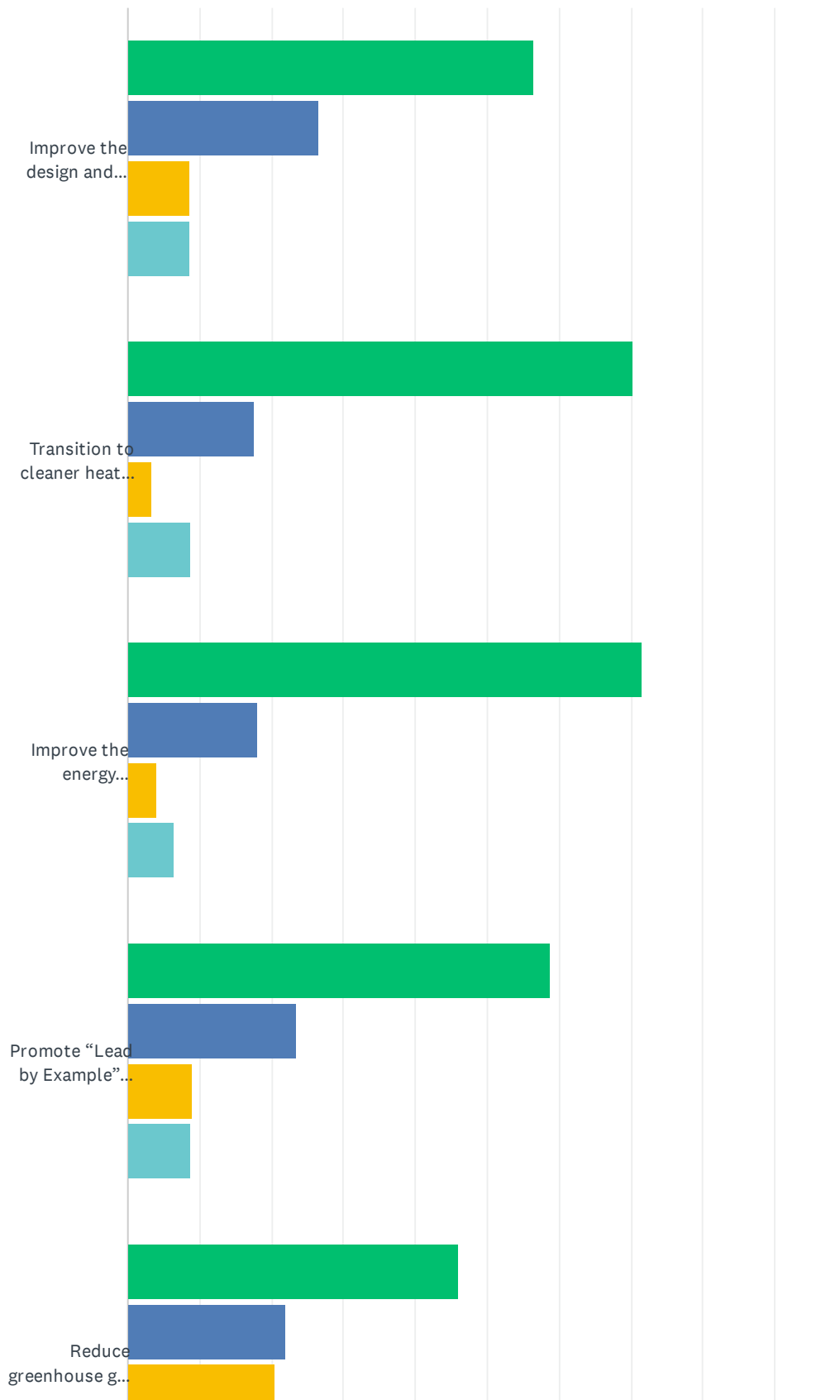
Overall, the open field comments for this section were particularly robust with suggestions, ideas and possible action steps for the Council. There are too numerous to highlight completely, but respondents did focus on residential housing much more than commercial or industrial buildings.

**Question to consider**

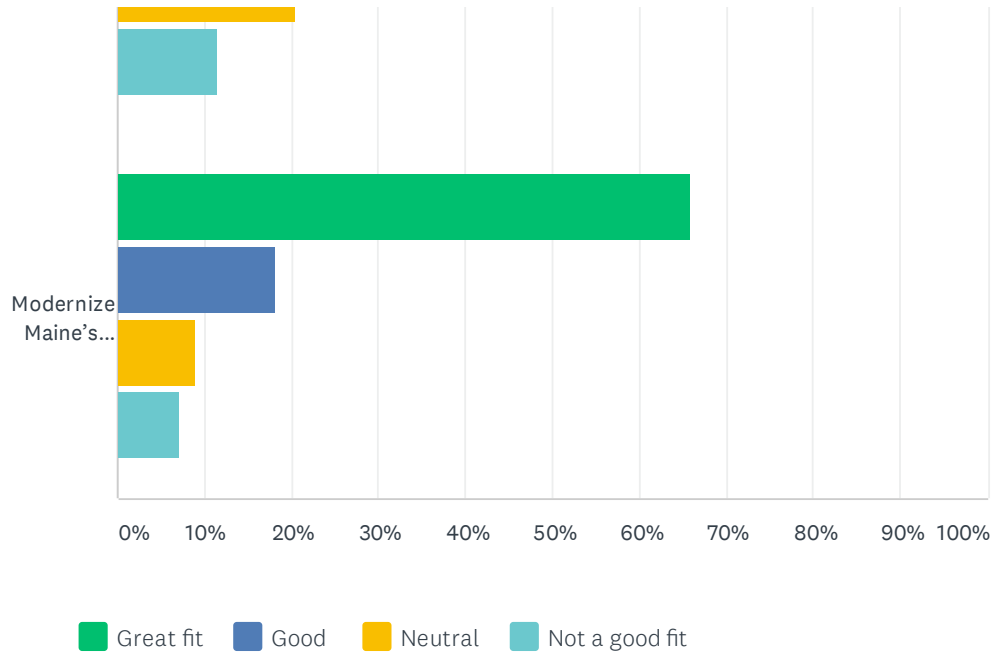
- Given the high number of “neutral” responses on the survey related to industrial users, and the prevalence of comments on residential housing, is more targeted outreach to commercial and industrial stakeholders needed?

## Q1 How would each of these strategies fit your community?

Answered: 582 Skipped: 0



# Maine Climate Council - Buildings, Infrastructure, and Housing Working Group Survey



|  | GREAT FIT     | GOOD          | NEUTRAL       | NOT A GOOD FIT | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------|------------------|
| Improve the design and construction of new buildings                             | 56.42%<br>325 | 26.56%<br>153 | 8.51%<br>49   | 8.51%<br>49    | 576   | 3.31             |
| Transition to cleaner heating and cooling systems                                | 70.34%<br>408 | 17.59%<br>102 | 3.28%<br>19   | 8.79%<br>51    | 580   | 3.49             |
| Improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings                              | 71.45%<br>413 | 17.99%<br>104 | 3.98%<br>23   | 6.57%<br>38    | 578   | 3.54             |
| Promote "Lead by Example" programs in existing and new publicly-funded buildings | 58.72%<br>340 | 23.49%<br>136 | 8.98%<br>52   | 8.81%<br>51    | 579   | 3.32             |
| Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from industrial processes                        | 46.02%<br>266 | 21.97%<br>127 | 20.42%<br>118 | 11.59%<br>67   | 578   | 3.02             |
| Modernize Maine's electric grid  | 65.80%<br>381 | 18.13%<br>105 | 8.98%<br>52   | 7.08%<br>41    | 579   | 3.43             |

## Transportation Working Group Survey Report

### Overview

The survey for the Transportation Working Group recommendations received 888 responses, the most among the working groups. Survey respondents as well indicated they were directed to the survey from a broad array of sources, however the Bicycle Coalition of Maine in particular was heavily cited for this survey. This survey also had a greater balance of self-identified age ranges among respondents as well.

### Observations

Responses to the draft strategies were the most balanced of any working group. All of the strategies were deemed a “great fit” for Maine by between 50.2 percent and 57.9 percent respondents, the closest range of any survey. “Not a good fit” responses were among the highest 7 and 12.3 percent for all the strategies, among the highest of all surveys across all the strategies. (Other individual strategies in other surveys had higher individual “not a good fit” percentages from respondents.)

The open field comments are voluminous, with myriad suggestions referenced across multiple strategies. Some common topics included:

#### Electric vehicles:

- *“I bought an EV and installed a charger a while ago and love it. We should strive to educate people in a practical vein. If you can use a rechargeable power tool or toothbrush why not benefit from an electric pick-up truck?”*
- *“Your emphasis on switching to EVs is off target and doesn't address the core issue of our climate change and sustainability problems which is horrible land use.”*
- *“It will be difficult to get people even with financial incentives to go EV . We have one car, an all-electric Nissan Leaf. A wonderful car which we have now had five-plus years - no maintenance, no oil change, powered by our solar panels. You'd think it would be obvious to people the financial advantages. But no! Even our most environmentally-conscious friends cannot get their heads around it. So tight is the choke-hold of the petroleum on our collective imaginations. To get people to go EV will require a massive education campaign and moreover promotion by dealers who see EVs as a long-term loss to their maintenance departments.”*

#### Public transportation:

- *“I live in a very rural area. Logging and water trucks are on the road constantly. Everyone has to drive to get to work. There are no charging stations within at least 2.5 hours from here. Having inexpensive public transportation to take people to the next biggest town an hour away could help.”*
- *“Public transportation is essential but not cost effective. How can we change that? Should we tax downtown Portland parking so it becomes more cost effective to bike or*

*ride the bus? Transportation infrastructure adaptation is also essential and requires “problem avoidance” messaging which is often difficult to implement given other urgent spending priorities. This will be a marketing challenge.”*

#### **Broadband deployment:**

- *“Expanded broadband helps with many problems including getting cars off the road, keep meetings happening on zoom to reduce commuting, spread people out rurally to enhance healthy lifestyles, etc.”*
- *“In a rural state like Maine, I favor placing the emphasis on enhancing broadband internet making it possible for people to participate in the economy, etc without needing to drive huge distances. Coming from metro-NY where public transportation is indeed the answer if trying to curb emissions, sadly I can't think it would gain much “traction”/ridership here where those who most need it live leagues apart.*

#### **Bicycle-pedestrian options:**

- *“Our roads need to be more bicycle friendly to encourage commuting and running errands by bicycle. Bicycle infrastructure is less expensive than traditional and broadband infrastructure, is more equitable for all residents, and leads to improvement in personal health and the environment.”*
- *“I would like to see more emphasis placed on bicycling and walking and infrastructure that would support those modes of travel. Paths for walking and cycling don't need to carry nearly as much weight as roads do, and, therefore, are much cheaper to build. Supporting bicycling and walking would also help less-economically-advantaged Mainers who may not be able to afford a car. Lastly, increasing the number of cyclists and pedestrians reduces traffic congestion, helping our existing infrastructure last longer and require less widening, expansion, etc.”*

A theme present in the open field comments could be described as rural skepticism, as many respondents included observations that the strategies, although favorable, would be challenging to implement in rural areas:

- *“Stick with ideas that have a chance to work in areas with a high population density. Don't get all wrapped up in thinking these are practical ideas for rural populations. They're not. Better fuel efficiency for fossil fuel vehicles would help both urban and rural residents and the climate.”*
- *“Our real challenge is to help our rural areas adapt to a low-carbon economy while doing our best to inadvertently further depopulate rural communities. Maine needs a serious and equitable conversation about how to reconfigure our rural areas so that rural people are supported but in a way that makes it possible for them to affordably reduce emissions and the cost of delivering government services to many rural areas. It may mean picking winning and losing rural communities or we risk having nothing but losing rural communities.”*

- *“Two words: Rural Maine. We have to drive distances to get food, gas, school. You cannot change that. EVs will do well in the big cities. The poor people of rural Maine can not afford them nor are they suitable for rural life. And with Covid, there will be lots of people moving to remote areas, destroying the environment, to live away from cities”*
- *“Need more EV charging stations in rural areas; need much better broadband service in rural areas; not likely public transportation will be cost-effective in rural areas, but can build on and enhance ride sharing programs”*
- *“We are rural, EV would be great but smaller rural communities don't have the \$\$ or the #'s now to put in the charging stations. We have one new resident who can't get a charge within an hour of here... We are halfway up the state an hour above Bangor”*
- *“Electrification is fine as long as the generation is fossil fuel free. Biodiesel and ethanol too much farmland be converted from food production. All the proposals unfairly treat rural populations in favor of urban dwellers. How about banning air conditioners south of Bangor? Sounds ridiculous doesn't it? Many proposals sound that bad to rural people.”*
- *“I believe in doing all of these things, but not sure it's practical for those of us out in the rural areas.”*
- *“Unless the committee expects the taxpayer to subsidize nearly every option you have mentioned it's just wishful thinking. Tell a resident that lives on a back road in a rural town he/she should rideshare or take public transportation to the grocery store or buy an electric vehicle.”*

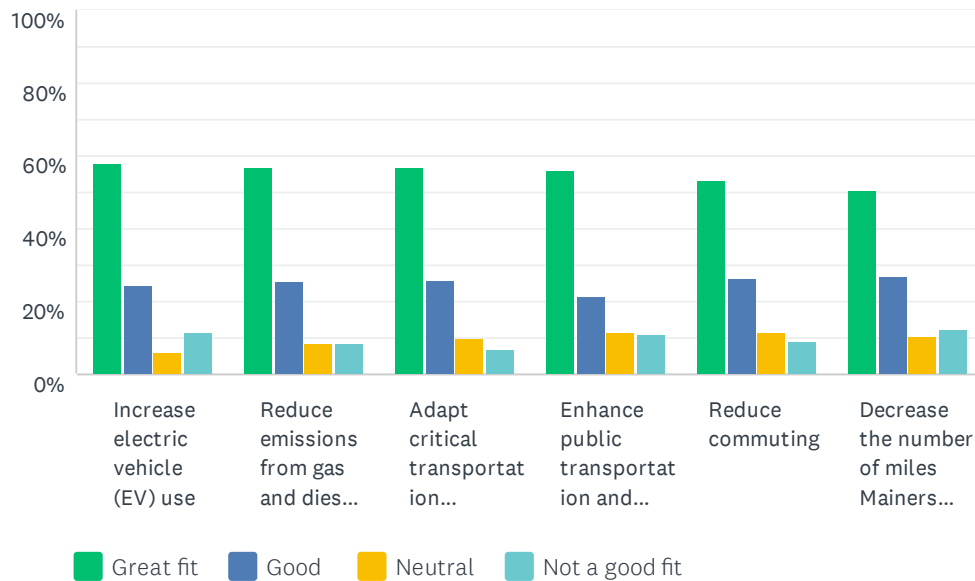
#### **Question to consider**

- Does the consistent response to all strategies indicate consensus, or that further refinement is warranted?
- What could address concerns that these strategies are impractical for rural Maine?



## Q1 How would each of these strategies fit your community?

Answered: 888 Skipped: 0



|   | GREAT FIT     | GOOD          | NEUTRAL       | NOT A GOOD FIT | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------|------------------|
| Increase electric vehicle (EV) use                                      | 57.94%<br>511 | 24.38%<br>215 | 6.24%<br>55   | 11.45%<br>101  | 882   | 3.29             |
| Reduce emissions from gas and diesel engines                            | 57.21%<br>504 | 25.65%<br>226 | 8.74%<br>77   | 8.40%<br>74    | 881   | 3.32             |
| Adapt critical transportation infrastructure for climate change impacts | 56.98%<br>498 | 25.86%<br>226 | 10.07%<br>88  | 7.09%<br>62    | 874   | 3.33             |
| Enhance public transportation and shared transportation options         | 56.01%<br>494 | 21.32%<br>188 | 11.56%<br>102 | 11.11%<br>98   | 882   | 3.22             |
| Reduce commuting  | 53.34%<br>463 | 26.38%<br>229 | 11.52%<br>100 | 8.76%<br>76    | 868   | 3.24             |
| Decrease the number of miles Mainers must drive                         | 50.28%<br>445 | 26.89%<br>238 | 10.51%<br>93  | 12.32%<br>109  | 885   | 3.15             |

## Energy Working Group Survey Report

### Overview

The survey for the Energy Working Group recommendations received 467 responses, including perhaps the most detailed, in-depth comments of any survey from the open comment fields. Survey respondents as well indicated they were directed to the survey from a broad array of sources (environment and climate groups, public meetings, advertising). No single referrer seems to have driven a disproportionate amount of respondents.

### Observations

Responses to the six draft strategies represent a contrast. Four were deemed as “great fits” by 68 percent of respondents or more.

*“All of these are excellent strategies. The challenge is to create ambitious enough quantifiable and specific goals and benchmarks and strategies for how they are paid for.”*

Overall, open field comments were favorable. However, many responses were about specific, detailed policy points, or referenced how current energy infrastructure projects or energy policy initiatives in the Legislature relate to the strategies.

Two strategies were viewed less favorably than the others, including registering the highest percentage of “not a good fit” responses of any working group recommendation.

Those strategies were Encouraging Combined Heating and Power facilities, of which only 41 percent of respondents felt was a great fit for Maine, and the Renewable Fuel Standard for Heating Fuels, of which just over 50 percent of respondents deemed a great fit. These two strategies also had more than between 12 and 13 percent of respondents deem them “not a good fit” for Maine.

Further comments from the open field responses indicate why these two strategies yielded disproportionately unfavorable responses compared to the others.

For example, some respondents indicated a conflict with CHPs as a strategy for rural areas.

- *“CHP was popular in the big cities like Boston 50 years ago and is still in existence. It does not work in the rural areas where I live.”*
- *“I probably don’t know enough about CHP to understand its applicability to my very rural town.”*
- *“CHP ...many small communities don't have buildings that could be adapted for CHP . CHP is a great idea, but it's not for everyone.”*

Other respondents were uncomfortable with biomass burning as part of CHP:

- *“The MCC should consider the level of GHG emission potential that long-term contracting for CHP facilities could achieve before endorsing it fully as an independent recommended strategy. For instance, GHG emission reductions could be marginal from these thermal process efficiency gains versus pursuing a strategy that focuses on decarbonizing the underlying fuel utilized.”*
- *“CHP can incentivize burning so recommend against.”*
- *“I don't understand CHP . If it's heat from burning biomass or other fuels, it seems like a bad idea (burning creates CO2) because it encourages burning.”*

Others offered in-depth analyses of CHP:

- *“1) The recommendation to encourage highly efficient CHP production facilities is a cost effective method to reduce GHG emissions although the 70% minimum efficiency may be too restrictive and slow the development of projects. Consideration should also be given to eliminate this efficiency requirement for a CHP fueled with a renewable energy source such as a biomass fueled rankine steam plant in a CHP configuration. 2) Detailed policy guidance is needed regarding the GHG accounting methodologies associated with a CHP project. The GHG emissions of a base load operated CHP plant should be compared against the base load GHG emissions of the grid and not the aggregate grid GHG emissions. In this way the further greening of the grid will not impede development of CHP projects.”*

There were fewer specific responses to the RFS standards for heating oil. Selections include:

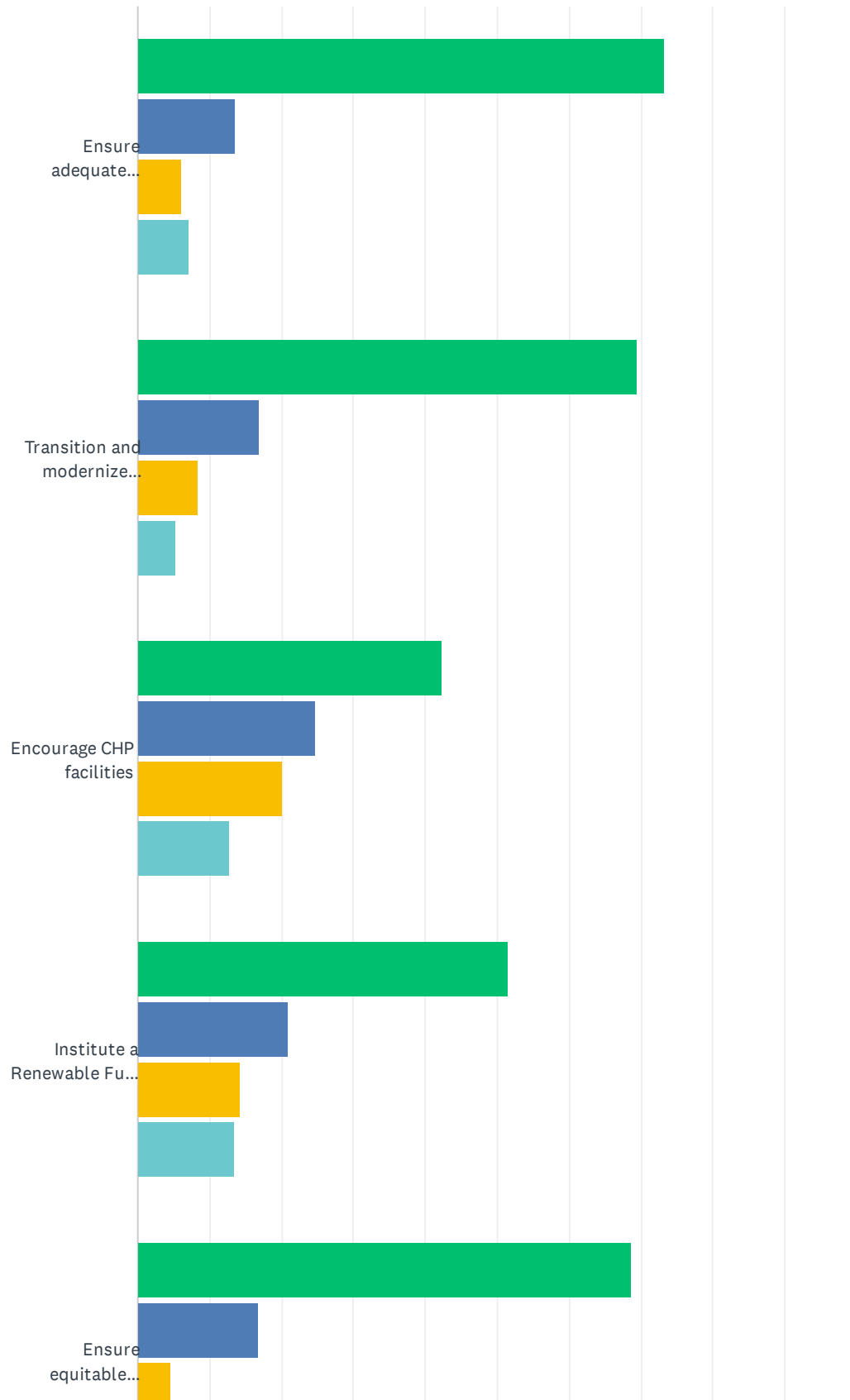
- *“Electricity produced from renewable energy is also a renewable fuel. It is not clear from this recommendation how electricity would be included in the RFS as a heating fuel. Not including renewable electricity as a heating fuel would be distortionary to the market of decarbonized heating options and could result in higher costs for heating and/or higher costs for GHG emission reduction. The MCC should clarify how renewable electricity, fueling such electrical heating technologies like heat pumps, would be included in an RFS.”*
- *“I am skeptical that either the combined heat and power, and renewable fuel standard recommendations will result in long-term climate benefits. We need to be thinking about how to ultimately get to a net-zero emissions power sector. Solutions that involve combustion of either natural gas or biomass, even if very efficient, are unlikely to be adequate.”*
- *“Renewable fuel standards are a great idea however I have concerns that the law of unintended consequences may lessen the positive impact of these standards. My reasoning for this is observation of the negative effects that ethanol in gasoline has had on engines over the years since it has been required.”*

**Question to consider:**

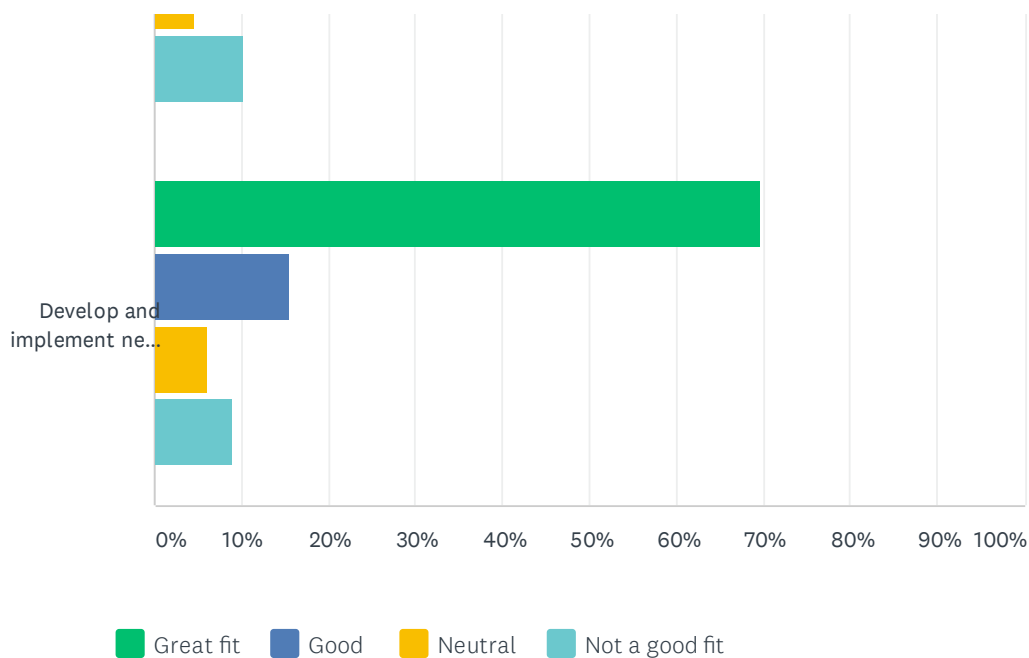
- How should the Council address concerns raised about CHPs and RFS?

## Q1 How would each of these strategies fit your community?

Answered: 467 Skipped: 0



## Maine Climate Council -- Energy Working Group Survey



|   | GREAT FIT     | GOOD          | NEUTRAL      | NOT A GOOD FIT | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------|------------------|
| Ensure adequate affordable clean energy supply to meet Maine's energy and climate goals                           | 73.16%<br>338 | 13.64%<br>63  | 6.06%<br>28  | 7.14%<br>33    | 462   | 3.53             |
| Transition and modernize Maine's electric grid  | 69.46%<br>323 | 16.99%<br>79  | 8.39%<br>39  | 5.16%<br>24    | 465   | 3.51             |
| Encourage CHP facilities  | 42.26%<br>191 | 24.78%<br>112 | 20.13%<br>91 | 12.83%<br>58   | 452   | 2.96             |
| Institute a Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) for all heating fuels   | 51.40%<br>238 | 20.95%<br>97  | 14.25%<br>66 | 13.39%<br>62   | 463   | 3.10             |
| Ensure equitable transitions and benefits in shift to a lower carbon economy                                      | 68.61%<br>317 | 16.67%<br>77  | 4.55%<br>21  | 10.17%<br>47   | 462   | 3.44             |
| Develop and implement new financing options necessary to meet Maine's clean energy and emission reduction targets | 69.57%<br>311 | 15.44%<br>69  | 6.04%<br>27  | 8.95%<br>40    | 447   | 3.46             |

## Community Resilience, Public Health and Emergency Management Working Group Survey Report

### Overview

The survey for the Community Resilience, Public Health and Emergency Management working group recommendations received the fewest number of responses (326) of any survey. Survey respondents as well indicated they were directed to the survey from a broad array of sources (environment and climate groups, public meetings, advertising). No single referrer seems to have driven a disproportionate amount of respondents.

### Observations

Nearly all the draft strategies were viewed quite favorably, and were deemed a “great fit” for Maine by between 65 and 73 percent of respondents.

*“If done right, these are all important strategies to bring to the forefront of Maine’s action plan. I foresee additional human resources necessary to build relationships with county, Tribal, and municipal leaders. Existing relationships are not to be taken for granted. Accessible training and assistance, in the context of tools for planning and decision making, must not only have an appeal for rural towns, but be seen as digestible, up-to-date (dynamic), and worth the effort for communities with limited resources. Without these things, even the most carefully planned content and resources will go unused where they are needed the most. Encouraging youth and student engagement is one way to build energy for certain programs, but the digital divide must also be addressed.”*

*“I view this local work as very important. So many in our community are marginalized and vulnerable. Food insecurity, heat stress, floods and droughts drastically affect many.”*

A prevailing theme among the comments encouraged the Council to ensure these strategies address inequities of climate impacts:

*“These are all great and important goals! I would also like to see more specific language (and perhaps this would come later) that recognizes the current racial and economic inequality of climate impacts. I would like to see environmental justice front and center in our community resilience plans.”*

Updating and modernizing land use regulations, with 60 percent of respondents indicating it as a “great fit” for their community, was viewed less favorably than the other strategies. In the comments, some respondents indicated concern this strategy would result in too stringent changes and harm local control or landowner rights.

*“I am against the overreach of government using land use regulation to control land owners on how to use their land. I am all in favor in stopping people from pollution the water table and controls for how much and the quality of water run off one’s land. I am not in favor of Draconian rules about shore land protection. Cities like Portland would never be allowed to exist today. We*

*need practical rules and not a generic 250 foot set back or something else like that. That is a taking without compensation.”*

Others were wary of changing land use regulations without commensurate financial support for implementation:

*“Modernization of land use rules without the funds to help communities implement those rules will result in devaluation of properties.”*

However, some respondents did strongly agree::

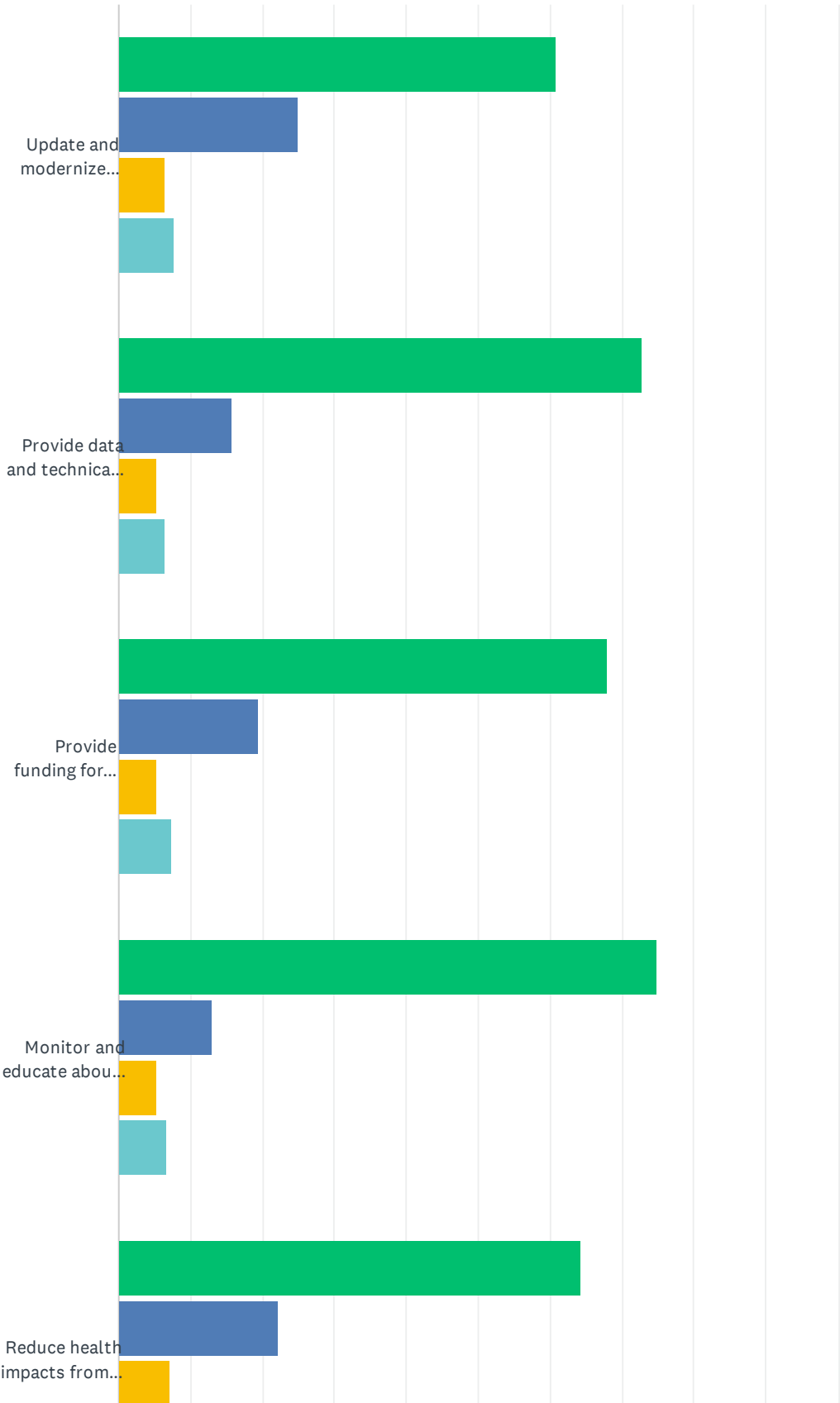
*“Updating land use regulations is hugely important. We should make sure that any kind of investment or decision that has a 25 or 50 year life span is using a realistic projection of SLR and flood in that time span. And it is critical to provide incentives to plan ahead thoughtfully to avoid problems when extreme weather events happen.”*

**Questions to consider:**

- Does the Council need to encourage more attention on resilience, public health or emergency management strategies based on the number of survey responses?
- How should the Council address the balance of regulatory reforms to assuage concerns about local control and landowner rights?

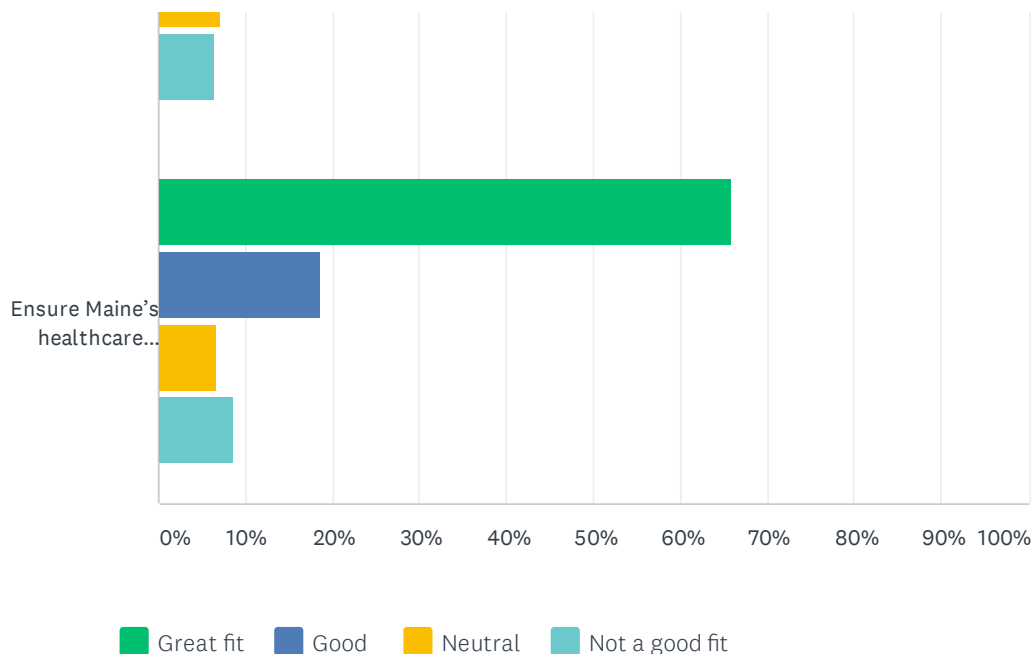
Q1 How would each of these strategies fit your community?

Answered: 326   Skipped: 0





# Maine Climate Council - Community Resilience, Public Health, & Emergency Management Working Group Survey



|  | GREAT<br>FIT  | GOOD         | NEUTRAL     | NOT<br>A<br>GOOD<br>FIT | TOTAL | WEIGHTED<br>AVERAGE |
|--|---------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Update and modernize Maine's land use regulations  | 60.87%<br>196 | 24.84%<br>80 | 6.52%<br>21 | 7.76%<br>25             | 322   | 3.39                |
| Provide data and technical assistance to communities about the impacts of climate change                           | 72.70%<br>237 | 15.64%<br>51 | 5.21%<br>17 | 6.44%<br>21             | 326   | 3.55                |
| Provide funding for municipal infrastructure projects that help communities plan for and respond to climate change | 68.00%<br>221 | 19.38%<br>63 | 5.23%<br>17 | 7.38%<br>24             | 325   | 3.48                |
| Monitor and educate about the public health impacts of climate change  | 75.00%<br>243 | 12.96%<br>42 | 5.25%<br>17 | 6.79%<br>22             | 324   | 3.56                |
| Reduce health impacts from high intensity weather events   | 64.31%<br>209 | 22.15%<br>72 | 7.08%<br>23 | 6.46%<br>21             | 325   | 3.44                |
| Ensure Maine's healthcare systems are prepared for climate change  | 65.95%<br>215 | 18.71%<br>61 | 6.75%<br>22 | 8.59%<br>28             | 326   | 3.42                |

## Coastal and Marine Working Group Survey Report

### Overview

The survey for the Coastal Working Group recommendations received 496 responses. Survey respondents as well indicated they were directed to the survey from a broad array of sources.

### Observations

Responses to the draft strategies were strongly supportive, with four of the seven strategies deemed a “great fit” for their community by at least 69 percent of respondents.

Some respondents also made it a point to note that coastal and marine issues are not just important to just coastal residents:

- *“I live in the mountains of western Maine. The protection of the coastal areas, waterfronts, and fisheries from the effects of climate change will have a direct impact on all the people of Maine.”*
- *“I don't live on the coast, but what happens on the coast affects us all--food supply and climate change.”*
- *“I live in an inland community, so these approaches do not directly impact my community. However, they are very appropriate for coastal communities and working fishermen. Please include fishermen collected data in the scientific monitor procedures.”*

Of the remaining three, one -- “Continue to grow Maine's diverse aquaculture sector” -- was deemed a “great fit” by fewer than half of respondents. This strategy also received a high percentage (11.2 percent) of respondents who deemed it “not a good fit” for their community.

Aquaculture was also a prevalent theme in the open field comments.

- *“There are some examples of aquaculture that protect the environment --- sea beds, wild fish stocks, fishing/lobstering, shorelines -- but there are other examples that do just the opposite and destroy fishing areas including the destruction of the sea and bay environments. Toxic use of antibiotics, pesticides destroy the natural flora and health of the water. Local input is necessary, as are, strong environmental safeguards, licensing, monitoring, shorter time frames for leases, and a density standard that minimizes the number of leases to what will protect, sustain, and increase wild stock and fishermen/lobstermen. Aquaculture cannot be a state dictate, a scientifically based plan with local input is critical.”*
- *“In your aquaculture plans, please include seaweed and kelp farmers, as their product is also great at storing CO2 in the water.”*
- *“Aquaculture is important up here; Lobster and fish populations are on the move with warming waters. Given the number of fishermen lobstermen here I could see people being receptive to increased responses to climate related problems.”*

- *“I am concerned that aquaculture includes fish hatcheries - which can be extremely deleterious to the indigenous environment. Yes to oysters, mussels, seaweeds that pre-exist in the environment and are immersed in the environment, thus entirely at the mercy and regulated by the earth's environment. Protect working waterfront infrastructure only when compliant with natural, carbon capture, net-zero solutions.”*
- *“Investments in aquaculture infrastructure and innovation are critical to building resilient working waterfronts and Maines blue economy.”*

Lastly, there was a clear message of urgency among respondents, which influenced some opinions about the strategies.

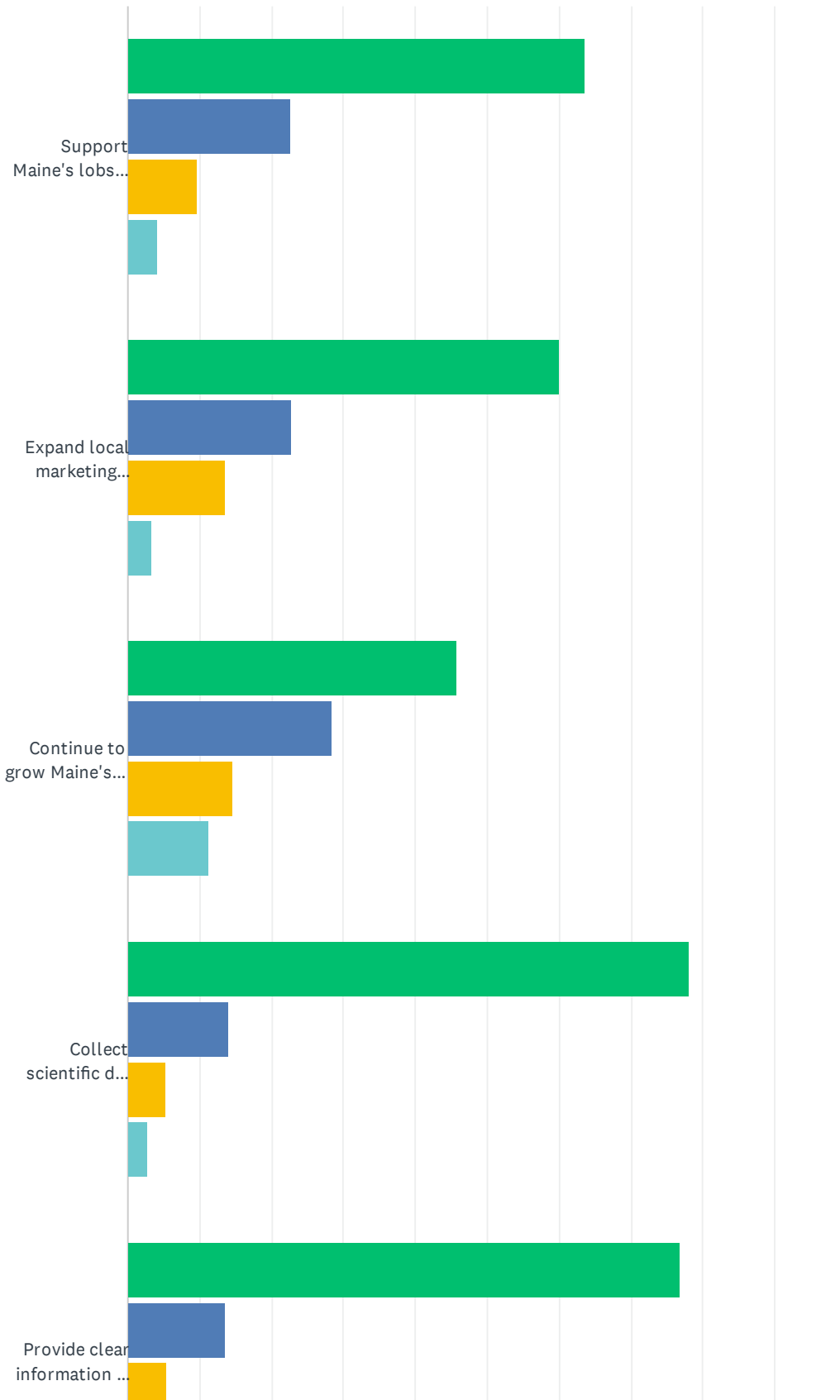
- *“I put down data collection as not a good fit and want to explain my view. I want researchers to be funded but in terms of funding priorities, I believe the time for implementation and response has been here for a while now & while useful, we do not need more data to begin addressing the impacts of climate change. As someone from a family of generational fishermen, pursuing an ecology degree, and having done internships at Friends of Casco Bay & GMRI, I have come to believe data collection gives us the false sense of doing something when other actions could have more impact.”*
- *“Stop pussyfooting. The impacts on coastal communities and industries are going to be all over us very very soon and long before we're ready at this rate. The situation is URGENT.”*
- *“The reason that I placed restoring marshland as a low priority is because you cannot restore marshgrass (or eelgrass) while our waters continue to warm because of green crabs. The only thing that keeps them in check is weather. With our continuing trend of warmer water any effort (and funding!) that goes to this is effectively being wasted. Given that environmental reality, it is my recommendation to focus the limited funding and time on other items related to climate change impacts.”*
- *“Way too much emphasis on studying, preparing and informing. We needed to start to transition yesterday.”*

#### **Questions to consider:**

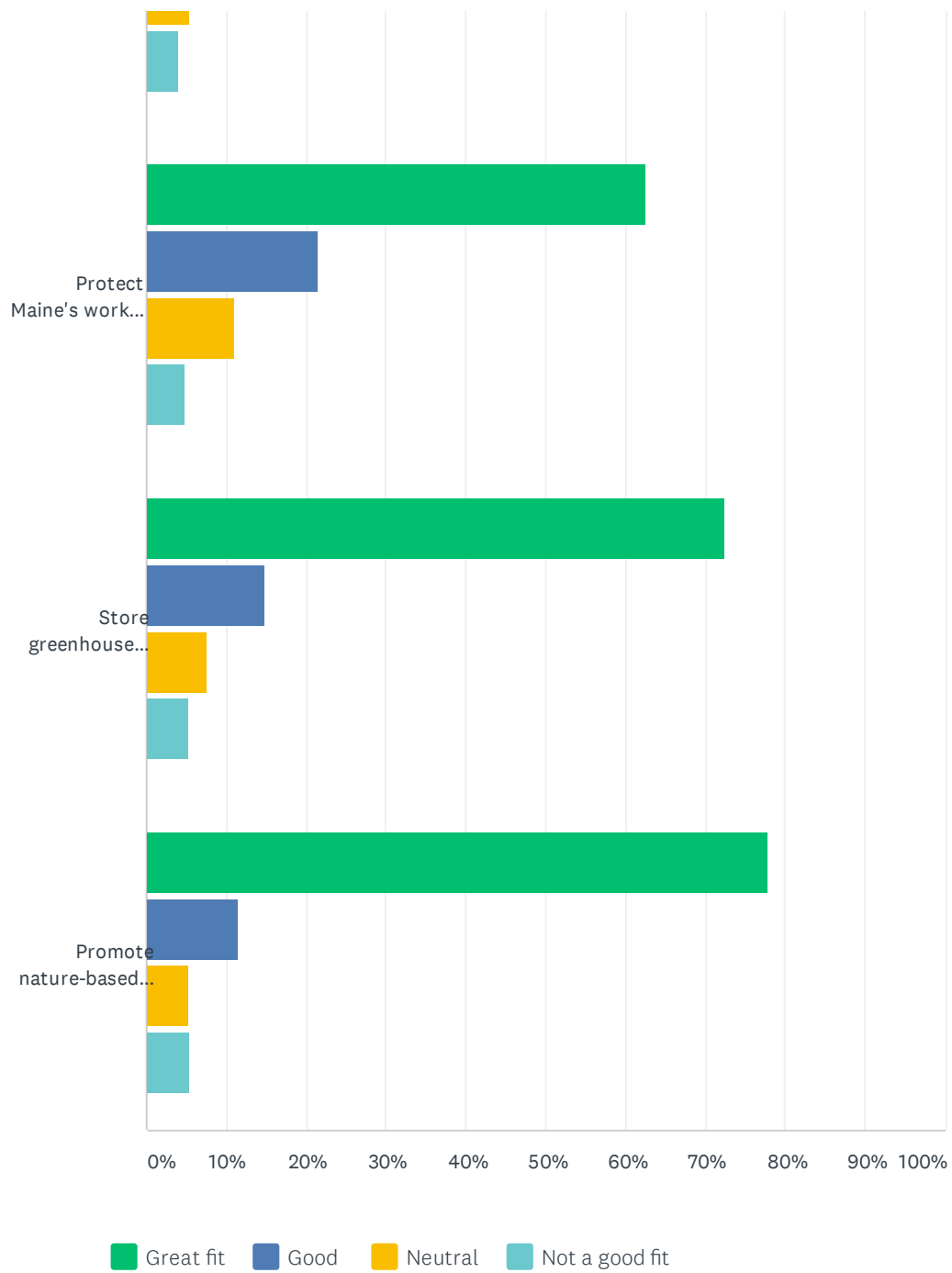
- What should the Council do in response to the volume of aquaculture comments?
- How do the strategies mesh with the sense of urgency conveyed by some survey respondents?

## Q1 How would each of these strategies fit your community?

Answered: 496 Skipped: 0



# Maine Climate Council -- Coastal and Marine Working Group Survey



# Maine Climate Council -- Coastal and Marine Working Group Survey

|  | GREAT<br>FIT  | GOOD          | NEUTRAL      | NOT A<br>GOOD<br>FIT | TOTAL | WEIGHTED<br>AVERAGE |
|--|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Support Maine's lobster and fishing businesses to prepare and respond to changing environments | 63.54%<br>312 | 22.61%<br>111 | 9.57%<br>47  | 4.28%<br>21          | 491   | 3.45                |
| Expand local marketing opportunities for Maine seafood   | 60.12%<br>297 | 22.87%<br>113 | 13.56%<br>67 | 3.44%<br>17          | 494   | 3.40                |
| Continue to grow Maine's diverse aquaculture sector  | 45.71%<br>224 | 28.37%<br>139 | 14.69%<br>72 | 11.22%<br>55         | 490   | 3.09                |
| Collect scientific data to understand the changes to Maine's coastal and marine areas          | 78.14%<br>386 | 13.97%<br>69  | 5.26%<br>26  | 2.63%<br>13          | 494   | 3.68                |
| Provide clear information and tools about climate change impacts                               | 76.83%<br>378 | 13.62%<br>67  | 5.49%<br>27  | 4.07%<br>20          | 492   | 3.63                |
| Protect Maine's working waterfront infrastructure from climate change impacts                  | 62.47%<br>308 | 21.50%<br>106 | 11.16%<br>55 | 4.87%<br>24          | 493   | 3.42                |
| Store greenhouse gases by conserving and restoring salt marshes and other coastal environments | 72.41%<br>357 | 14.81%<br>73  | 7.51%<br>37  | 5.27%<br>26          | 493   | 3.54                |
| Promote nature-based solutions to protect coastal communities from climate change impacts      | 77.78%<br>385 | 11.52%<br>57  | 5.25%<br>26  | 5.45%<br>27          | 495   | 3.62                |

## Natural and Working Lands Working Group Survey Report

### Overview

The survey for the Natural and Working Lands Working Group recommendations received 833 responses, second most among the working groups. Survey respondents as well indicated they were directed to the survey from a broad array of sources, however the Maine Organic Farmers and Growers Association was heavily cited for this particular survey.

### Observations

Responses to the draft strategies were strongly supportive. Overall, strategies from this working group received the highest percentage of strongly favorable responses and the lowest percentage of unfavorable responses across strategies of any working group.

A majority of the eight strategies were deemed a “great fit” for Maine by at least 73 percent of respondents, among the highest favorables recorded by any survey. “Not a good fit” responses were between 2 and 4 percent for all the strategies, among the lowest of all surveys.

The favorability of the strategies was reflected in the open field comments:

- *“All of these are sorely needed strategies. I see too many parcels being clear cut with no regard for carbon sequestration or preservation of habitat.”*
- *“These strategies are important since they emphasize a reliance on LOCAL resources, and local resilience, which will become more and more essential as the impacts of climate change become more severe.”*
- *“I live in rural western Maine, and all of the above would be incredibly helpful in keeping our economy vibrant.”*
- *“This area of Midcoast Maine would greatly benefit from these measures, and has many land trusts to support the work on land, fresh and salt waters.”*
- *“All of these strategies would be helpful in our community. Washington County is economically depressed. Financial and management assistance is always welcome.”*
- *“All above are great fits for Piscataquis County.”*

One strategy, “Promote the use of Maine’s value-added forest products,” had the lowest percentage of “great fit for Maine” responses at 50 percent. This strategy also had the highest percentage of neutral responses by far, with 15 percent. However, only 4 percent of respondents deemed it “not a good fit.”

The open field comments featured a variety of responses about forest products in general, which provide added insight:

- *“Maine’s working forests have sustainably provided over 6 million cords of wood for manufacturing for over 5 decades and the inventory of wood is still increasing. Any policy changes that will reduce the available timber harvest due to climate change is a non-starter for the economy of Maine and it’s working families. The most effective*

*solution to carbon sequestration is to continue timber harvesting and forest products manufacturing. Value added initiatives from current products produced is a win/win for our economy, carbon sinks and our working families.”*

- *Too much promotion of forest products could lead to over cutting of the very trees, forests that help reduce carbon. We could see this happening even in Maine.*
- *For "Promote the use of Maine's value-added forest products", I selected that it would not be a good fit. This isn't because the idea of utilizing wood mill by-products is necessarily bad, but that relying on industrial forestry, no matter how "sustainably" managed, is archaic, damaging, and unnecessary, when we possess the knowledge and ability to manufacture many products traditionally comprised of wood/wood pulp, out of hemp instead. A focus on large scale hemp production would not only save our forests, but provide a profitable farming/processing/marketing opportunity for many of Maine's communities. I should hope this is taken into consideration, as a means to a healthier future for our people and our environment.*
- *Maine's forest products industry needs protection from foreign competition, not expensive investment plans. The state should reduce regulations rather than add additional programs when we have so little funding available.*

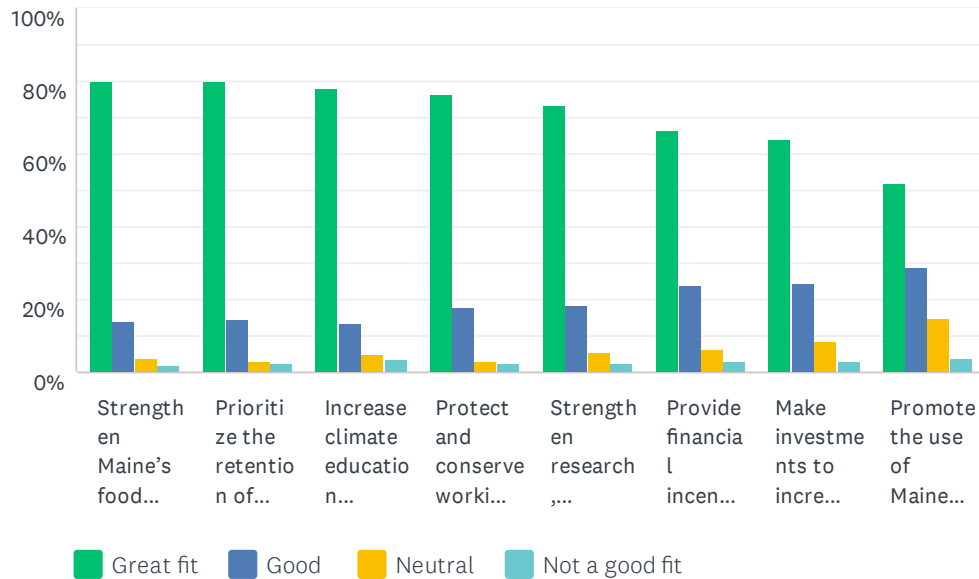
#### **Question to consider**

- With such strong consensus on a majority of the draft strategies, what avenues could the Council consider for refining them?
- Is additional stakeholder engagement on the forest product strategy warranted?



## Q1 How would each of these strategies fit your community?

Answered: 833 Skipped: 0



|  | GREAT FIT     | GOOD          | NEUTRAL       | NOT A GOOD FIT | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------|------------------|
| Strengthen Maine's food systems  | 79.83%<br>661 | 14.13%<br>117 | 4.11%<br>34   | 1.93%<br>16    | 828   | 3.72             |
| Prioritize the retention of Maine's valuable working and natural lands                 | 80.02%<br>661 | 14.41%<br>119 | 3.03%<br>25   | 2.54%<br>21    | 826   | 3.72             |
| Increase climate education related to forestry, agriculture and natural lands          | 78.05%<br>647 | 13.51%<br>112 | 4.95%<br>41   | 3.50%<br>29    | 829   | 3.66             |
| Protect and conserve working forests, farms and natural lands                          | 76.69%<br>635 | 17.87%<br>148 | 3.02%<br>25   | 2.42%<br>20    | 828   | 3.69             |
| Strengthen research, development, and monitoring of natural and working land practices | 73.61%<br>611 | 18.31%<br>152 | 5.42%<br>45   | 2.65%<br>22    | 830   | 3.63             |
| Provide financial incentives and technical support                                     | 66.67%<br>548 | 23.97%<br>197 | 6.57%<br>54   | 2.80%<br>23    | 822   | 3.55             |
| Make investments to increase wildlife crossings and aquatic organism passage           | 64.13%<br>531 | 24.52%<br>203 | 8.33%<br>69   | 3.02%<br>25    | 828   | 3.50             |
| Promote the use of Maine's value-added forest products                                 | 52.05%<br>431 | 28.86%<br>239 | 14.98%<br>124 | 4.11%<br>34    | 828   | 3.29             |