

# MOVING MAINE NETWORK | 2022-24 POLICY PRIORITIES

These priorities were developed through input from hundreds of stakeholders representing various interests and lived experiences across the state. Adopted by the Steering Committee in fall 2022, these priorities and the related actions will advance the key mobility issues our community seeks to address.

## 1. Increase Affordability of Transportation

Moving Maine supports efforts to lower public transportation and personal vehicle costs through both public and private resources and policies that remove barriers and create incentives. Public transportation consists of a variety of modes including buses, ferries, light rail, and paratransit services.

### *Key Strategies*

- 1a. Increase state funding for transit. Rework state transportation funding to provide additional funds to public transportation. Investment in public transportation increases economic returns, saves household income, and provides individuals with a better quality of life.<sup>i</sup> Moving Maine will align with [Policy Action 2023](#), led by Build Maine and GrowSmart Maine which includes a focus on this.
- 1b. Pilot a Universal Basic Mobility Program. Provide a minimum guaranteed level of transportation through a means-tested program that subsidizes public transit, vanpool, ebikes, and other services.
- 1c. Reduce fare-related barriers to public transport. Remove barriers to accessing transit for people with low incomes through the creation of zero-fare transit or expansion of reduced fare programs.<sup>ii</sup>

## 2. Ensure Access to Community and Public Transportation

Moving Maine supports efforts to provide every community with access to affordable and accessible transportation solutions that ensure people can reach medical, social, educational, and other opportunities. The specific solutions and services will be different for different places – based on the need and the geography.

### *Key Strategies*

- 2a. Streamline contracting and systems for transportation providers receiving state funding. In many cases, transportation providers hold numerous state contracts with different terms and conditions – and reporting expectations. Aligning these using guidance from the [U.S. Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility](#) will result in greater efficiency and cost savings.
- 2b. Assess ways to expand ability to utilize non-emergency medical transportation through the DHHS brokerage system. A segment of Mainers who are ineligible for MaineCare but have limited income lack important transportation resources. Making changes to Maine's non-emergency medical transportation structure will require working within federal regulations.
- 2c. Improve consumer experience of ADA paratransit and MaineCare-funded services. Consumers who depend on ADA paratransit and MaineCare-funded services frequently note lack of communication, inadequate language access services, and long wait times as key concerns. Mechanisms for addressing these concerns – and communication on actions being taken – are needed to increase trust and improve the consumer experience.
- 2d. Increase funding, incentives, and support for volunteer driver programs. In many parts of the state, volunteer driver programs are the most cost effective and feasible solution for providing transportation access. These programs would have greater sustainability with support and funding through state government and public-private partnerships.

2e. Increase state mileage reimbursement rate. Adjusting mileage reimbursement rates to keep pace with costs will enable service providers to keep providing rides and volunteer driver programs to recruit and retain staff to meet the demand for rides throughout the state.

### 3. Increase Safety and Accessibility of Walking, Biking, and Rolling

Moving Maine works to ensure that walking, bicycling, and the use of mobility devices such as walkers and wheelchairs are fully integrated into the transportation network – and that roads and sidewalks are safe places for those traveling outside of a motor vehicle.

#### *Key Strategies*

3a. Advance implementation of Complete Streets Policies. Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, and maintaining streets to enable safe access for all people of all ages and abilities who need to use them.<sup>iii</sup> MaineDOT is currently revising the state’s policy.<sup>iv</sup> This is an opportunity to maximize the policy’s power to create places that support safe, convenient, and enjoyable walking, biking, and rolling. Moving Maine is partnering to lead the statewide Complete Streets Working Group for [Policy Action 2023](#).

3b. Strengthen enforcement mechanism and compliance standards for ADA requirements. The Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees people with disabilities equal access to public spaces and transportation.<sup>v</sup> Greater urgency is needed in the transition to accessible infrastructure and services.

3c. Increase state funding for pedestrian, wheelchair, and bicycle infrastructure. We must rework state transportation funding to provide additional funding to pedestrian, wheelchair, and bicycle infrastructure. Moving Maine is part of the [Policy Action 2023](#) effort in this arena and will continue to collaborate with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine on advocacy efforts.

### 4. Increase Coordination of Transportation Access Efforts

Moving Maine will advance cross-sector coordination and support mobility management in all regions of Maine.

#### *Key Strategy*

4a. Create statewide and regional mobility management programs. Coordinated mobility management programs provide the capacity to address gaps and advance solutions, enabling improvements to the reach, efficiency, and affordability of transportation.<sup>vi</sup> Across the U.S., and here in New England, states are putting structures in place to ensure communities have capacity to address transportation challenges and increase access. Maine should follow the lead of other states in establishing statewide and regional mobility management programs.

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<sup>i</sup> American Public Transportation Association <https://www.apta.com/>

<sup>ii</sup> Barone, Christina, “Fare Policy—& Zero Fares—Can Help Transit Agencies & the Communities They Service Post-Pandemic” (2022). Nelson Nygaard. <https://umjp9n8g2j2ft5j5637up17u-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Fare-Policy%E2%80%94and-Zero-Fares%E2%80%94Can-Help-Transit-Agencies-and-the-Communities-They-Serve-Recover-Post-Pandemic.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> More details on Complete Streets are available at this link <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/what-are-complete-streets/>

<sup>iv</sup> MaineDOT’s current policy is available at this link <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/completestreets/>

<sup>v</sup> U.S. DOT Regulations on ADA <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/civil-rights-ada/ada-regulations>

<sup>vi</sup> National Center for Mobility Management <https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/for-mobility-managers/>