



NEW FUNDING PROPOSALS TO SUPPORT CLIMATE ACTION
MAY 17, 2021

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In recent weeks, the Mills Administration has announced three significant funding proposals to be presented in the 130th First Regular Session of the Maine Legislature: The Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, a \$140 million bond package, and a supplemental budget for the upcoming biennium.

The Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan: Backed by more than a billion in federal funds, the Plan makes historic investments in unaddressed needs and longstanding challenges in Maine to support 1) immediate economic recovery from the pandemic; 2) long-term economic growth for Maine; and 3) infrastructure revitalization. To read the full plan, visit maine.gov/covid19/maine-jobs-and-recovery-plan.

Bond package: The governor's bond proposal intends to rebuild Maine's transportation system and conserve lands and waters, by dedicating \$100 million to maintain and upgrade Maine's transportation system and \$40 million over four years to conserve lands and waters for Maine people through the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) Program.

Supplemental budget: The governor's supplemental budget proposes to fund 55% of local education costs, initiatives to improve the health of Maine people, tax relief for low- and middle-income Maine people, enhanced revenue sharing for municipalities; PFAS remediation, infrastructure upgrades, and additional funding for government reserves.

Each recommends funding that supports objectives from the Maine Climate Council's four-year climate action plan, *Maine Won't Wait*. This document highlights each recommendation by the *Maine Won't Wait* strategy that it supports, as outlined below.



STRATEGY A: EMBRACE THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION IN MAINE

THE MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN

Establish the Maine Connectivity Authority to Achieve Universally Available Broadband: \$150M

Transportation is responsible for 54% of Maine’s annual greenhouse gas emissions. Deploying broadband will help to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Greater access to virtual work, medicine, education, and other opportunities that allow people to utilize online services without driving.

Launch a Workforce Transportation Pilot: \$5M

This funding will support local, regional, or state Workforce Transportation Pilot Projects to connect workers and employers. Expanding public transportation, ride-sharing programs, and developing innovative public transportation options in rural areas can replace the number of single-occupancy trips and reduce household vehicle and commuting miles and costs.

Expand Municipal and Public EV Charging: \$8M

Maine Won't Wait establishes ambitious EV targets. These funds, through the Department of Transportation and Efficiency Maine Trust, will support the continued expansion of electric vehicle charging stations at town buildings, school buildings, State facilities, and public locations. A reliable charging system that ensures an EV owner can charge their vehicles along major routes, at public places, at work and at home is important to expanding electrification.

STRATEGY B: MODERNIZE MAINE'S BUILDINGS

THE MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN

Save Money Through Energy Efficiency: \$50M

This initiative, via the Efficiency Maine Trust, will accelerate weatherization and efficiency upgrades for Maine homes, especially for low-income, older Mainers and renters (\$25M). These funds will also help municipal, county, school, and community organizations to secure efficiency grants by providing matching funds (\$15M), and support incentives for industries and businesses to invest in energy cost savings and efficiency measures (\$10M).

Build More Affordable Housing for Maine's Workforce: \$50M

These funds would be used to expand housing options that are affordable to workers and their families to own or rent, through existing financing programs through MaineHousing, as well as new incentives in partnership with DECD. They would also provide planning and technical assistance for communities, developers, and builders to encourage construction or production of affordable, energy efficient housing units close to service and employment centers to support families and reduce commuting times.

STRATEGY C: REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS IN ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

The supplemental budget includes staff support for the Governor's Energy Office to advance clean energy initiatives, such as grid modernization, and policy counsel, and the Department of Environmental Protection to implement rulemaking on climate plan objectives such as phasing out HFCs, and instituting appliance standards.



STRATEGY D: GROW MAINE'S CLEAN-ENERGY ECONOMY AND PROTECT OUR NATURAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIES

THE MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN

Invest in Heritage Industries: \$50M

The economic disruption of the pandemic has made investment in heritage industries – farming, fishing, and forest products — urgent to stabilize these core economic engines of Maine's rural areas. This investment supports Maine's climate plan goals as well, by expanding local food system capacity (\$30M) and encouraging innovation in climate-friendly forest products (\$20M). From value-added products like mass timber, to emerging demand for bioplastics and biofuels, a significant opportunity exists to grow this sector, create jobs and economic security in rural Maine, and drive the future of modern, efficient building products and energy solutions, while supporting jobs and sustainable forests.

Create Clean Energy Partnerships: \$8M

The Clean Energy Partnership will support clean energy and energy efficiency job growth through workforce development programs developed in partnership with industry and education leaders. This sector-focused initiative will establish clear training pathways for clean energy careers, support internships and apprenticeship programs, and create an online platform for attracting workers, sharing training opportunities, and highlighting job opportunities. The Partnership will also target investments to encourage innovative clean energy companies in Maine through entities such as the Maine Technology Institute and others.

Additional workforce investments in Maine's Career and Technical Education system, Community Colleges and University System will target several sectors of clean energy and climate career opportunities. Additionally, targeted funding for diversity, equity and inclusion aligns with the climate plan's focus on advancing equity and workforce opportunities through Maine's climate response.

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

The supplemental budget includes funding for technical support, studies and research related to offshore wind, and staff support for the Governor's Energy Office and Department of Marine Resources to advance the Maine Offshore Wind Initiative in areas such as scientific research, policy, and economic development.



STRATEGY E: PROTECT MAINE'S ENVIRONMENT

BOND PACKAGE

Land For Maine's Future Bond: \$40M

The Governor's bond proposal dedicates \$40 million over four years to conserve lands and waters for Maine people through the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) Program, the State's primary funding vehicle for conserving land for its natural and recreational value.

Maine Won't Wait sets a target to increase by 2030 the total acreage of conserved lands in the state to 30%. Protecting natural and working lands is critical to maximize carbon storage, support working farms and forests, ensure valuable ecosystems remain in place for future generations, and contribute to Maine's fight against the effects of climate change.

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

The supplemental budget includes a one-time allocation of \$400,000 to support forest carbon mapping by the Department of Environmental Protection, which would help the department calculate carbon sequestered by landowners in support of sequestration incentive programs.

It also includes \$5 million to leverage local and Federal funds to recapitalize the municipal culvert program at stream crossings, improving fish and wildlife habitats and increasing infrastructure climate resilience and public safety.

THE MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN

Improve Fishing Industry Infrastructure & Monitoring: \$16M

These funds will support public health monitoring as it pertains to shellfish and water quality by upgrading equipment to support maximizing harvest opportunities in both the aquaculture and wild shellfish sectors. Investment in climate-resilient infrastructure on the coast are needed, including building investments to promote public health and efficiency and a marine patrol vessel upgrade for cost savings and safety. These investments will allow the limited agency funds available for capital expenditures to be put to better use as match to leverage additional federal funds for monitoring and research related to climate change and its emerging impacts in marine species.

STRATEGY F: BUILD HEALTHY AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

Resilience Planning And Emission Reduction

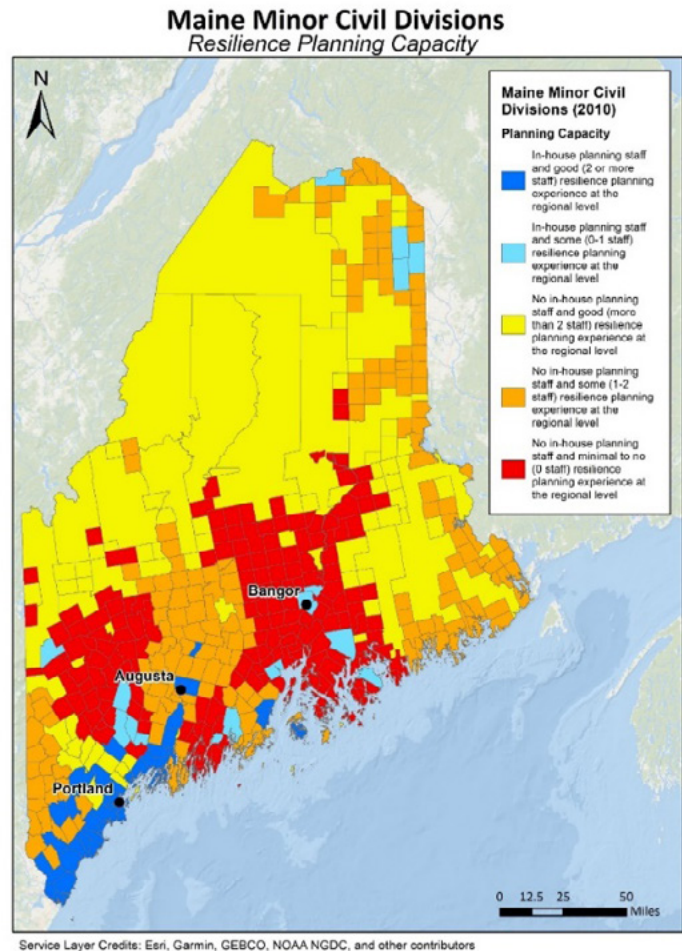
Governor Mills’ supplemental budget request includes funding for municipal partnership projects to promote resilience planning and emission reductions at the local level.

As demonstrated in the December 1 climate action plan *Maine Won’t Wait*, we will need, over time, to expand resources to support communities to plan for and reduce their risks from climate change impacts. Lack of capacity, expertise, and funding are consistently cited by municipalities as reasons why they are not able to address their climate risks.

In addition, towns have uneven access to planning resources across the state to support other local planning issues, including housing access, economic development, and other land use considerations, as evidenced in this chart which was included in the *Maine Won’t Wait* report.

The Climate plan recommends the state provide robust technical assistance and funding to communities by 2024 to support local and regional climate-resilience initiatives. The proposed funds would support regional and municipal climate projects for resilience and technical assistance and incentives for energy generation and reducing emissions.

This effort builds on the pilot project currently underway to work with 3 providers in 8 communities across the state to do climate resilience planning and implementation. The purpose of the pilot project is to: 1) advance climate resilience planning and implementation in multiple towns representing the diversity of Maine people and regions; 2) demonstrate replicable engagement models for assisting communities that integrate three key functions: regional technical assistance, encouraging best practices, and funding support; and 3) inform the future development of key climate-related focus areas for communities, community resilience goals, and support for community resilience in Maine.



The proposed funds would support regional and municipal climate projects for resilience and technical assistance and incentives for energy generation and reducing emissions. The request includes \$2.5M for resilience grants plus \$3M for emissions and energy technical assistance and grants, plus staffing capacity to support communities in these areas.

THE MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN

Ensure The Safety Of Drinking Water: \$25M

Through the State Revolving Fund (SRF) and the CDC drinking water program, these funds will address significant backlog of drinking water projects and help municipalities leverage further ARP funds. These investments improve public health, provide community benefits, reduce the burden for local rate payers, and support construction jobs and for many projects, improved climate resiliency.

Repair Wastewater Infrastructure: \$25M

Much of Maine’s infrastructure was constructed well before climate change was understood as a threat. It is no surprise, then, that climate change is already having a negative impact on our roadways and bridges, shoreside businesses and working waterfronts, water-treatment facilities, and utilities. Three wastewater treatment plants are at risk of catastrophic failure due to rising sea levels by 2050.

This investment will provide \$22M for municipal wastewater and infrastructure projects, help leverage local ARP funds and accelerate the timeline of these essential local projects that protect public health, provide community benefits, reduce the burden for local ratepayers, support construction jobs and for many projects, climate resiliency.



STRATEGY G: INVEST IN CLIMATE-READY INFRASTRUCTURE

THE MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN

Protect Infrastructure From Climate Change: \$20M

Climate change poses a serious risk to Maine infrastructure, with damage estimates in the billions of dollars unless action is taken. The “Cost of Doing Nothing” analysis makes clear if Maine does not adapt to climate change, losses are expected to be significant to communities, individual property and business owners, and the state.

These funds will create a pilot “Infrastructure Adaptation Fund” to support local, regional, and state infrastructure projects that addresses these vulnerabilities. These funds will help protect vital infrastructure most at risk, help unlock Federal and other funding options, and benefit public safety and emergency management efforts.





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