



PENOBSCOT CLIMATE ACTION

APPENDIX B

Community Process Memo

Penobscot Climate Action is data-driven and community-informed. This memo serves to summarize how community input was collected and incorporated throughout the project.

Penobscot Climate Action unfolded in two phases, beginning in May 2022, and ending in March 2024:

Phase I

Climate vulnerability assessment (CVA) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory

Using GIS-based mapping, a review of relevant climate science and projections, and interviews with residents and town staff, the CVA and GHG emissions inventory provide a baseline assessment of current and future climate risks for the region. These data served as the foundation for decision making and action planning that took place during the second phase of the project.

Phase I was led by two stakeholder groups:

1) The Project Team, composed of BACTS, Bangor and Orono town staff, and consultants from BSC Group, Introba, and Linnean oversaw the conceptualization and implementation of all phases of the project;

2) The Advisory Committee, composed of over 20 individuals representing town staff, community-based organizations, Penobscot Tribal membership, and youth, steered the engagement and outreach process throughout the project, and provided a local community perspective to inform the overall development of Penobscot Climate Action.

During Phase II, the Project Team, with the help of the Advisory Committee, also convened several Working Groups to inform the production of the toolkits. Working Groups were composed of town staff, residents, and advocates. Working Groups are discussed in more detail in the section on Phase II below.

Phase II

Community-driven climate action planning and strategy development

To solicit broad community feedback that directly informed the development of the Penobscot Climate Action strategies, Phase II rolled out in three stages:

1) Principles and Priorities Development Stage: Generated project principles and priorities, and developed accountability measures that ensured that the Project Team upheld their commitment to the principles, priorities, and community-led approach.

2) Solution Co-Creation Stage: Co-created strategies that were directly informed by the community's principles and



priorities, guided by Maine Won't Wait and other regional plans, and supplemented with technical expertise from BSC Group, Linnean, and Introba. Working Groups identified ten strategies with high near-term impact to develop into toolkits. Toolkits provide additional specific information and resources that identify opportunities for, and reduce barriers to, strategy implementation.

3) Implementation Workshops Stage: Hosted workshops to support the implementation of the toolkits and identify opportunities to enhance the usability of the final toolkits for key stakeholders.

During the “Principles and Priorities Development Stage,” the Project Team administered digital surveys, attended community events, and organized small group meetings to engage residents, town staff, and other local leaders. Through these engagement activities, the Project Team and Advisory Committee developed a set of principles that guided the development of the plan. The principles that guided the project include:

- **Equity and Environmental Justice**
- **Environmental Health**
- **Community Resilience**
- **Regional Collaboration**

The engagement activities also highlighted five issue areas of high priority to residents of the region. Strategies were developed to explicitly intersect with the following priority areas:

- **Housing**
- **Transportation**
- **Environment and Quality of Life**
- **Local Economies and Livelihoods**
- **Health**

During the “Solution Co-creation Stage,” the Project Team administered digital surveys, attended community events, and organized small group meetings to engage additional residents, town staff, and other local leaders. Through these engagement activities, the Project Team identified a wide range of climate action strategies that set a vision for regional action through: 1) facilitating progress toward state climate action goals; 2) addressing the principles and priorities as

A note about surveys:

Surveys were circulated using physical flyers in public spaces such as libraries, coffee shops, and other communal venues. Additionally, distribution occurred at local events, complemented by online distribution on city websites, news articles, social media platforms, and email lists.

The first survey, conducted from April to June 2023, generated just over 300 participants. Responses helped build the Project Team’s understanding of climate action priorities and preferences throughout the Penobscot Climate Action region. Additionally, the survey directly facilitated the identification and recruitment of residents within the Penobscot Climate Action region who expressed interest in participating in subsequent stages in the process, including working groups, the second survey, and implementation workshops.

Starting in June 2023, the second survey generated 265 responses, and indicated that there was wide-spread support for the strategies that were further developed during the “Solution Co-creation Stage.” These findings guided Working Group discussions, and supported the toolkits. Notably, the results exposed a gap between the perceived community prioritization of strategies and individuals’ willingness to actively engage in related actions. This highlights the importance of providing and communicating accessible pathways for individuals in the region to engage with the strategy implementation.

defined by community members through the “Principles and Priorities Development Stage”; and 3) fitting into the specific regulatory contexts of the 11 towns in the region.

From that list of strategies, Working Group members met three times from August through October to identify ten



strategies to be developed into implementation toolkits. Working Groups were composed of residents, town staff, and local leaders with expertise or interest in each topic, to ensure that the toolkits were grounded in the lived experiences of residents in the region. The toolkits were chosen for their potential for impact, relative level of importance to community members, time-sensitivity, and relative complexity for implementation (i.e., involve a number of partners, steps, or phases to implement), thereby benefiting most from a toolkit to support implementation.

The community process concluded with two implementation workshops to support staff and key stakeholders from the 11 towns in the project region to engage with the recommendations of Penobscot Climate Action. The workshops provided space for town staff and key stakeholders to strategize, share resources, and deepen supportive relationships toward shared goals.