

Updating New Hampshire's Climate Action Plan

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

local people, local priorities, and local solutions!

Online via Zoom

December 6, 2023

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM



**University of
New Hampshire**

Carsey School of Public Policy



Welcome – Thank you for being here!

New Hampshire Listens is working on behalf of the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to [design and facilitate community engagement](#)—an essential component of NH's Priority and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans

We are here today to hear from you!



**University of
New Hampshire**

Carsey School of Public Policy



A FEW REMINDERS...

We have formatted today to gather input from you and our time will move quickly.

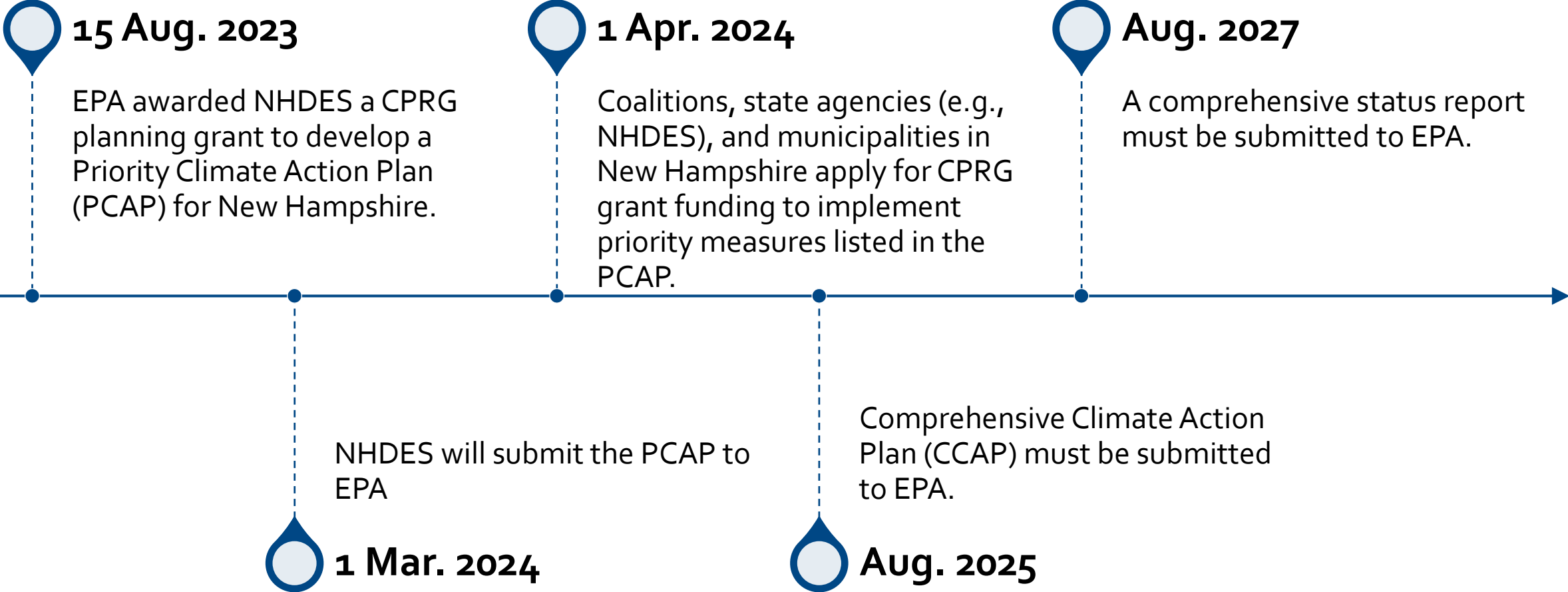
- Mute in large group
- If possible, cameras ON during small group breakouts.
- You are welcome to listen.
- Use chat for responses and resources
- *Message Mikayla - NH Listens for tech assistance*
- Group Agreements:
 - Listen to others and share air time.
 - Participate and be as fully present as you can.
 - Respect each other and our brief time together.



Updating NH's Climate Action Plan - An opportunity for New Hampshire:

- NH was granted federal funding in August to update NH's Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The four-year program runs **2023 - 2027**.
- Community engagement is an essential component to update NH's Climate Action Plan
- NH will identify priority projects by *(March 1, 2024)* to apply for implementation funds available from the federal government *(April 1, 2024)* to move projects forward here in NH!

Over the course of the four-year program running to 2027:



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

local people, local priorities, and local solutions!



Your near-term, implement-ready priorities could become funded projects!

Between **December 2023 and early February 2024**, join a community conversation to learn and talk together about local priorities and possibilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Air pollution affects us ALL in our homes, at work, where we and our families learn, and where we play.
- These conversations are focused on talking about local issues and potential solutions.
- The State of New Hampshire needs to hear from local community members interested in, and already working on, air pollution reductions.
- Your input will inform NH's Priority Climate Action Plan, implementation proposals, and future plans.

[See registration links HERE](#)



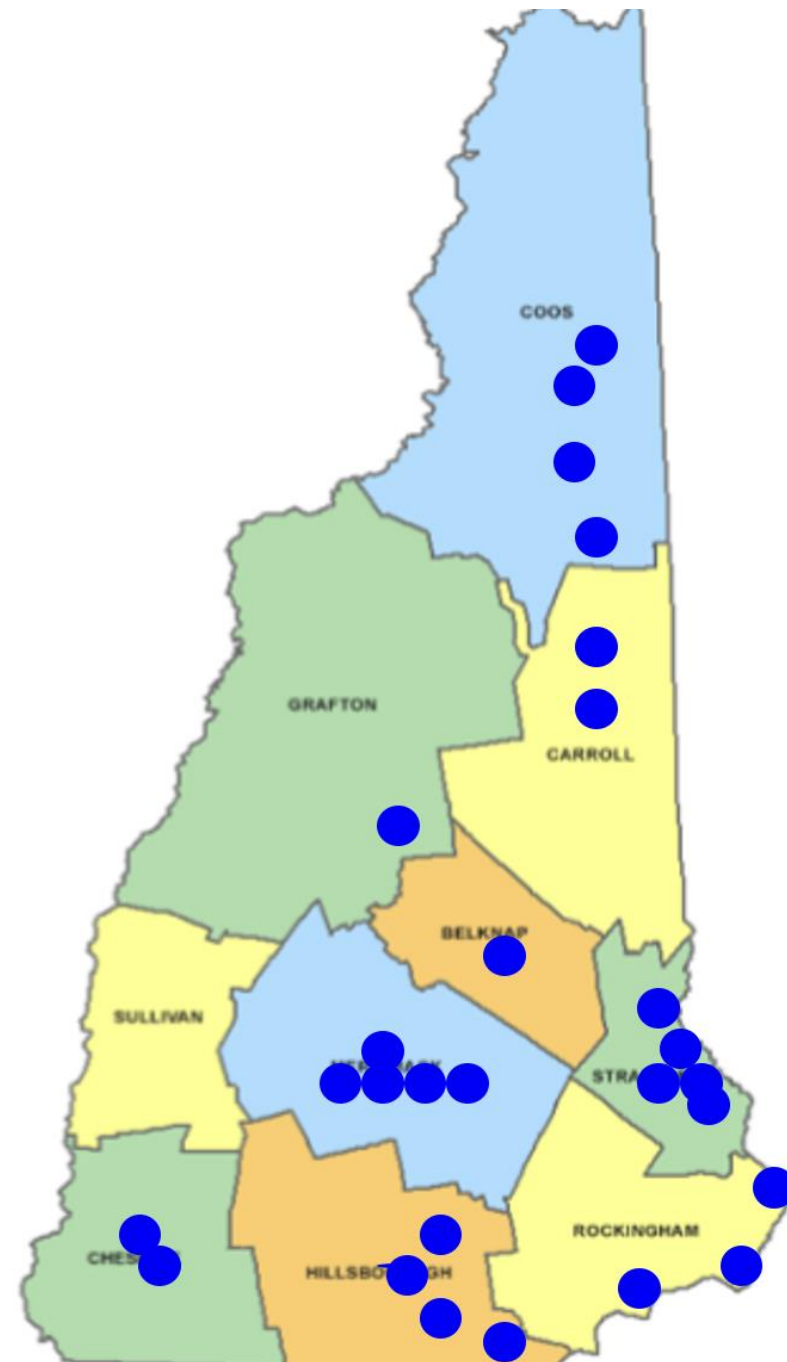
Today's Agenda:



- **Who's here:** Interactive NH map
- **Spotlight:** Implementation grant goals and questions to consider
- **Spotlight:** Commitment to NH communities - Justice40
- **Share:** What we're hearing so far from community engagement
- **Small Group Discussion:** Your priorities for reducing emissions where we live, work, learn, and play
- **Wrap up and what's next**
- **Q & A 5:55 PM**
- **Close 6:00 PM**
- **Brief Q&A with NHDES Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Staff till 6:20pm**



Who's in the zoom?



A key component to each climate plan is including investments linked to the federal Justice40 Initiative

Karen Craver, MPH

Administrator, Environmental
Health Program

Environmental Justice Coordinator,
Air Resources Division

Share your thoughts with the team:
cprg@des.nh.gov

“the Federal Government has made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution”

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/>

Community Engagement throughout the Planning Grant

Kurt Yuengling

Community Engagement Specialist

Environmental Health Program,

Air Resources Division

kurt.r.yuengling@des.nh.gov

Share your thoughts with the team:

cprg@des.nh.gov



Implementation Grant Goals



- EPA anticipates approximately 30 to 115 grants under this; range \$2 to \$500 million each
- We seek your help identifying the ***near-term, high-priority, implement ready*** projects in NH to apply for federal funding this spring
- Focused on:
 - Projects, not policy
 - Emissions reduction
 - Implementation ready

Goals include:

- Implement ambitious measures that will achieve significant reductions by 2030 and beyond;
- Pursue measures that will achieve substantial community benefits by reducing air pollutants, particularly in low-income and disadvantaged communities;
- Complement other funding sources to maximize GHG reductions and community benefits;
- Pursue innovative policies and programs that are replicable and can be “scaled up” across multiple jurisdictions.

<https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/about-cprg-implementation-grants>

What We're Hearing

Last Week: Cross-Sector Stakeholders Brainstorm - 11/30/2023



A FEW OF THE MANY: Near-term, high-priority, implement ready priorities, projects, programs, policies that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by sector in NH

Transportation	Electric Vehicle Initiatives
	Focus on public transportation
Electricity generation and/or use and Industry	Grid Efficiency
	Solar for Community Buildings
Commercial and Residential Buildings	Weatherization improvements
	Build contractor capacity
Natural and working lands and Agriculture	Plant perennials and urban trees
	Support stewardship of natural spaces
Waste and materials management and Wastewater	Update aging infrastructure
	Recycle waste for energy

What We're Hearing

Interviews



**MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES in your
community**

**BARRIERS to advancing the work and needed
changes**

Share your thoughts with the team:
cprg@des.nh.gov

Small Group Breakouts (choose 1)

Directions

- You will be moved into a small break out room for 45 min. dialogue
- Facilitator will guide you through questions
- We want to hear from everyone!
- Group agreements - Share airtime please!

Focus questions:

1. What actions would reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?
2. What is achievable in your home and community?
3. How do we work better together?

Sectors Rooms:

- Transportation
- Electricity generation and/or use and Industry
- Commercial and Residential Buildings
- Natural and working lands and Agriculture
- Waste and materials management and Wastewater



Small Group Breakouts

Dialogues

1. **What actions would reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?**
 - We are focused on identifying the **near-term, high-priority, implement ready** projects in NH to apply for federal funding this spring - what specific projects do you want included?
 - What is achievable at your home? In your community?
 - ***Reminder - the focus on greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution reductions***
2. **How do we work better together at the local level in NH?**
 - What are the biggest barriers you see in reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the local level? At the state level?
3. **Thinking back on our conversation, what 2 - 3 ideas do we want to share with the full group?**

Things to Consider: Reducing emissions by sector in NH

Transportation

- Modes of travel?
- Travel needs?
- Replacing equipment?
- Planning/zoning changes?

Electricity generation and/or use and Industry

- Power sources?
- Heating sources?
- Project scale?
- Improvements to the grid?

Commercial and Residential Buildings

- Building design
- Buildings codes HVAC systems?
- Equipment upgrades
- Maximizing facility usage?

Natural and working lands and Agriculture

- Replacing/upgrading equipment?
Local food sources?
- Increasing carbon storage in soils?
Forest?
- Restoring degraded lands to wetlands/forests?

Waste and materials management and Wastewater

- Diverting/reducing waste from landfills?
- Reducing/capturing methane emissions?
- Other uses of the land/facilities?

Small Groups Notes – Slides 18-42

These are raw notes taken by facilitators during the session and later themed and summarized in the online community engagement report.

Not all notes meet the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant or Priority Climate Action Plan Criteria. They are to inform the NHDES team as they write the plans using a community-engaged approach.



TRANSPORTATION 1

BRAINSTORM: *Near-term, high-priority, implement ready* projects to reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?

- Weatherization - need more training for homeowners. Also need more capacity for low-income weatherization
- Train the trainers
- Need professional marketing for weatherization to get people engaged. Info from a trusted source
- Zoning is critical. Many residents don't know anything about it or how to engage. Work to improve general knowledge
- Create and support close-to-home opportunities for outdoor recreation
- More public transit
- Coal plant - Bow, have heard owners want to convert it

TRANSPORTATION 1a

- Need education & encouragement
- Hudson going onto Community Power - lower cost, more energy efficiency, cleaner fuel sources
- May need to totally rethink single stream recycling
- Zoning - many towns don't allow small lots or small houses.
- Allow more multi-family
- Come up with a traveling education program to explain property taxes
- Underserved communities - eliminate the wait list for utility efficiency programs
- Laconia Tech School - "Trade Track"
- NH State House efficiency upgrades
- Train students in high school to join local clean up or renovation projects. See Palmer Center-Hudson
- Hudson police station - being worked on locally now

TRANSPORTATION 1b

- Outreach especially to seniors. Need to address both income limitations & hard to tackle such a large project
- Utilities need to re-tool/re-think a 2-way relationship with customers
- Old housing stock. Need to button up, improve efficiency of old housing stock
- Recycling - many towns do it. Need a really effective training to residents. Need to address misinformation
- Recycle more
- Compost
- Eliminate or charge a fee for single use plastic bags- combine with give away of free reusable bags
- Most municipal buildings in most towns

TRANSPORTATION 2

Thinking back on our conversation, what 2 - 3 ideas do we want to share with the full group?

- Improve efficiency of old building stock - public & private
- Devote a lot of \$ and time on education
- Train the trainers
- Incentivize people to get engaged
- Comm outreach to both residents & Gov't
- Need grants/support
- Re-think single stream recycling

ELECTRICITY GENERATION & INDUSTRY 1

BRAINSTORM: *Near-term, high-priority, implement ready* projects to reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?

- Green mountain power; need battery back ups and microgrids
- Change zoning laws and infrastructure to get chargers electric ready
- Oldest housing stock in NH; gas heat and indoor air quality/asthma
- Indoor AQ in old housing (elevated asthma)
- Retrofit old heating equipment
- Monitoring heat loss on buildings and homes using drones
- Tracking mechanisms (Grants and reporting of economic sectors)
- Energy Efficiency
- For renters & landlords
- Weatherization for low-income households
- Educating on weatherization
- What is the best way to partner
- Need to give intentional focus for renters and the tools that will help renters

What is Achievable?

- Gas to electric - most people don't know how different the air quality will be if you get ride of your gas stove - need to let people know about that
- Having a NHDES travel crew who identifies heat loss and ask people if they want their air quality measured inside their house
- Lots on addressing the legislation and ordinances that block solar and EV stations

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS 1

BRAINSTORM: *Near-term, high-priority, implement ready* projects to reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?

- Replace fossil fuel generation with renewable generation
- Mass Transit
- Public availability for compost opportunities
- Smart Grid
- Infrastructure for low emission transit - bike lanes
- Reduce use of fossil fuels - natural gas and propane
- Infrastructure for low emission transit - bike lanes
- Expedite closure of Bow Power - Use infrastructure to interconnect renewables like solar farm
- Walkable Communities
- Public Transit Resources instead of Consumer electric vehicle Incentives
- Reduce combustion of construction debris and potentially recyclable materials
- Solar on schools combined with infrastructure upgrades (roof replacement)

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS 1a

- Locally Produced Power – Community Power Coalition NH
- Dark Skies Initiatives
- Renewables and grid-scale storage
- Expanding funding for NHTSA programs
- Time of use electric vehicle charging rates,
- advanced metering, transactional energy
- State level electric vehicle consumer incentives
- Install geothermal heat pump infrastructure during existing excavation
- Expanded photovoltaic (PV) generation - grants for schools
- Closing / readapting incinerator in Penacook
- Improved efficiency to reduce demand on renewable sources
- Reducing incineration (Bow Power and Wheelabrator) in Low-Income Disadvantaged Communities
- 100% renewable power with storage
- Scale up renewables to offset fossil fuel use
- Funding for electric vehicle/plug-in hybrid electric vehicle for municipal vehicle use

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS 2

What is Achievable in your home or community?

- Supporting community power - Concord is already working and applying on the process
- Community power program - self determine how much green power
- Closing Bow Power plant - turning it into solar farm - adapting to renewable energy
- Incinerator in Penacook - readapting / closing
- Keene - redoing streets, concerned about parking spaces more than pedestrian flow. Taking opportunity to put in geo-thermal pump when doing infrastructure projects.
- Growing awareness and education about location of incinerators / polluters in lower-income neighborhoods - where are these located in NH communities?
- Wealthier NH communities have opportunity to take on some of the renewable energy projects or other opportunities - How do we share the opportunity with other NH communities, especially low income and disadvantaged communities?
- Expand NH Saves programs

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS 3

How do we work better at the local level in NH?

- NH Saves - legislative conflicts
- Portsmouth - focus keeps being low-hanging fruit, we're not going to make a big difference to climate change if we keep focusing on short-term projects
- We need to focus on reducing reliance in fossil fuels and at the same time as scale up renewal
- Let's get 100% clean power in NH - storage for renewable energy - not fossil fuel in the back pocket
- Communities with more resources (like Bedford) can enact some projects - like solar on schools - but how do we roll this out at statewide scale?
- NH SAVES is limited by not allowing anything electric - can it be a different statewide program
- Electric vehicle incentives - not equitable use of funds in NH

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS 4

Thinking back on our conversation, what 2 - 3 ideas do we want to share with the full group?

- Think Big - Replace all Fossil Fuel use with renewable generation and storage
- Use Less
- Use Smart
- Smart Grid improvements to better
- Utilize renewable generation

NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS & AGRICULTURE 1

BRAINSTORM: *Near-term, high-priority, implement ready* projects to reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?

- Improve Public Transportation ++, also emphasize walkable towns and cities
- Increase Virtual Work/work from home
- Make sure that information is presented in a manner that is understandable
- Legislation is needed to reduce emissions- focus on policy
- Legislation to hold people responsible for environmental damage, i.e. pierce the veil for core entities
- Most effective public outreach has been outreach that doesn't assume a deficit, but instead assumes value of varying experience and understanding; take a strengths-based approach
- Legislation example: reduce single use plastics; extended producer responsibility legislation

NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS & AGRICULTURE 1a

- Consider how the forest economy fits with greenhouse gas reduction
- Consider heat islands, specifically in disadvantaged areas- focus on adding more greenspace/tree canopy
- More green space, more trees, utilize ecosystem services to reduce/capture carbon, etc.
- Additional monitoring of landfills
- More/better stormwater infrastructure, stormwater utilities like Dover
- Support and promote net-zero energy in public buildings as a community approach
- More planning, of land use
- Incentivize renewable energy and stop subsidizing fossil fuels
- Help people to understand how to measure emissions so that they can consider how to prioritize and reduce

NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS & AGRICULTURE 1b

- General comment: need for public stakeholder information- education and improved understanding can help to inform input and action, data can support understanding
- Research on cumulative impact of the toxins in emissions
- Ensure that someone on the implementation team with expertise in effective messaging
- Legislation requiring the Inclusion of affected communities in all planning that affects them.
- Recognize that we need to take a long-term look/approach when thinking about outcomes/how change would impact where we are in the future
- Create positions similar to pollution prevention, but for greenhouse gas emission reduction (specialists who can go out and assess and make recommendations)
- High school and community college curriculum focus on greenhouse gas reductions

NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS & AGRICULTURE 1c

- Small district heating and cooling
- Need change of mindset, NEW DEAL type programs to mobilize people
- Wood heat- US EPA standards for low polluting/high efficiency wood stoves, incentivized by tax credit- could further incentivize change-outs, with a focus on communities that experience poor air quality
- Reduce barriers for renters to secure better approaches to heating/ home energy/ places to charge electric vehicles- work with landlords and tenants to achieve this (the Fed. Housing Finance Authority is currently looking at renter rights like habitability and connection between this and housing cost)
- Technical and financial support for community net zero efforts
- Better interactive electrical metering- so that we can use Electric vehicles to power the grid as well as take from the grid

NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS & AGRICULTURE 2

Thinking back on our conversation, what 2 - 3 ideas do we want to share with the full group?

- Theme- it's going to take all of us to make changes; consider education and communication at multiple levels- including funding for high school and community college curriculum with the recognition that improved understanding can facilitate change. Also, look to and learn from what other communities have done
- Legislation- for example, extended producer responsibility
- Reduce barriers for renters (and other populations that face barriers) to secure better approaches to heating/ home energy/ places to charge EVs- work with landlords and tenants to achieve this

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 1

BRAINSTORM: *Near-term, high-priority, implement ready* projects to reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?

- Barriers in New Hampshire's Government
- How the food system impacts climate change - Keeping Food Local
- Shifting to more efficient lighting and other electrical uses
- Foods are more culturally relevant to the community where it is grown
- Incentives/ cost support for solar energy for town offices, schools, and homes
- Barrier of inertia, people become accustomed to status quo (e.g., building techniques)
- Decarbonize and electrify buildings, including residential buildings

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 1a

- Build out infrastructure for electric vehicles at state-owned facilities, incentivize electric vehicles use
- Barrier: Current attitude can be changed by
- education and public awareness
- Community Power for the Androscoggin Valley - Renewable Energy & Distributed Power
- Protect open space and wetlands, which are carbon sinks and protect from flooding
- Climate change concerns should be front-page news (not secondary)
- Understand what is clean power energy. Which is cleanest?
- Changing minds through funding and storytelling
- Some people do not believe that we can change the course we are on.
- Improve increase green spaces in the City of Manchester - Community Gardens, Green Space

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 1b

- Developing more sustainable seed or crops that can adapt to climate change (e.g., erosion, extreme heat, dry conditions, pest).
- Barrier - Getting shareholders to relinquish some of their profits for the benefit of the climate
- Barriers - Zoning, housing, transportation.
- Climate change is not always a priority for low-income communities - concerned about immediate issues
- City green spaces that cool, provide food, and act as carbon sink. Picking the right crops for the area.
- Model planning and zoning regulations to limit sprawl and reduce emissions

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 1c

- Reducing use of plastic, recycling - grant to assist with recycling. NH never had a bottle bill.
- Barrier - Many people do not want to be regulated; need to enhance our sense of protecting the community
- Berlin is interested in a street revitalization- make the City more walkable
- Incentives for buying electric school buses, which would also reduce student exposure to hazardous pollutants
- Current regulations contribute to sprawl - thought rules were good, but regulations created sprawl
- Rather than legislate or force behavior, draw attention to climate change crisis in a relatable way
- Groups working on creating, expanding rail trails (e.g., WOW trail)

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 2

What is Achievable in your home or community?

- Keep local food in communities
- Developing sustainable seeds or crops that can adapt to climate changes that we're now going to continue to face (extreme heat and dry conditions; pest resistance)
- Culturally relevant food
- Decarbonize and electrify buildings
 - Buildings are a huge source of emissions
- Developing programs using grant money to assist economically disadvantaged people to improve efficiency of homes and government buildings
- Community power for ACV, renewable power
- Identify what clean power regeneration is; build capacity to under
 - Which energies are cleanest and impacts (hydroelectric, biomass, natural gas, coal, and so forth)
- Shifting to LED, efficient lighting
- Subsidizing solar and introducing alternative energy in schools
- Electric vehicle Infrastructure (school buses, more charging stations)
- Protect open space and wetlands

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 2a

- Systemic issues that has happened around zoning; difficult to navigate
 - Housing, employment and other social determinants of health
 - People prioritize what is in front of them (family, econ. status)
 - People are not receptive to climate change; other things are on their mind
 - Want to prioritize these conversations to these communities; where we are and how did we get through
- Plastic
 - NH is inefficient with recycling
 - Not sure where the plastic goes
 - Can we use grant money to reduce plastic waste?
- Greenhouse
 - Has composting containers at local greenhouse (Loudon, Proven Perfect)

How do we work better at the local level in NH?

- Government has not passed bills/legislation supporting clean energy
 - Issue of campaign financing
 - Frustrating for those who want to see progress
- Inertia
 - Sprawl: people are used to keep building and using up open space
 - Becomes an issue of transportation, commute
 - Public health problems
- Knowledge
 - Need to make people more aware of
 - Balancing both side, it's natural for media to be unbiased but this is a real crisis
 - You can't change people's mind, but you can give them new information
- There's a lot of denial, and a lot of deniers
- Having two-way conversation with media to alert them with the time-sensitive issue

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 3a

- Can't place blame
- Human activity is the cause, and we can change the activity
- All for programs that can create jobs
- Getting shareholders of fossil fuels to relinquish the need for profit; the gains made by burning fossil fuels
 - Nobody can own alternative means of energy (solar)
- Since the 80s, the government's turned against regulation
 - Seems like in every sector; now, people don't like to be regulated
 - Some regulations that we have, and support contribute to the sprawl
 - Local zoning and planning policies, NH instituted a lot of laws
- Model planning and zoning regulations where other towns have created ideal regulations

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER 4

Thinking back on our conversation, what 2 - 3 ideas do we want to share with the full group?

- Improve increase green spaces in the City of Manchester - Community Gardens, Green Space
- Berlin is interested in a street revitalization, make the City more walkable and bikeable
- Groups working on creating, expanding rail trails (e.g., WOW trail)

Large Group Discussion

Thinking back on our conversation, share 2 - 3 ideas with the full group.

All of the ideas and priorities captured during today's meeting and small groups will inform NH's Priority and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans (PCAP and CCAP)

Join us for community conversations local people, local priorities, and local solutions!

In Person

[Register for any of the dates and times below for online community conversations.](#)

Air pollution affects us all in our homes, at work, where we and our families learn, and where we play. The State of New Hampshire needs to hear from local community members interested in, and already working on, air pollution reductions! Your priorities could become funded projects.

Online

[Register for this online session](#)

Tuesday, January 9 | 5 PM

[Register for this online session](#)

Wednesday, January 24 | 6:30 PM

[Register for the Greater Capitol Region Conversation](#)

Tuesday, January 16 | 5 PM | Concord, NH

[Register for the Greater Seacoast Conversation](#)

Wednesday, January 17 | 5:30 PM | Hampton, NH

[Register for the Greater Nashua Conversation](#)

Thursday, January 18 | 5 PM | Nashua, NH

[Register for the Greater Connecticut River Valley Conversation](#)

Thursday, January 25 | 5:30 PM | Claremont, NH

[Register for the Greater Monadnock Conversation](#)

Thursday, January 25 | 6 PM | Winchester, NH

[Register for the first North Country Region Conversation](#)

Wednesday, January 31 | 5 PM | Berlin, NH

[Register for the Greater Manchester Conversation](#)

Thursday, February 1 | 5 PM | Manchester, NH

[Register for the second North Country Region Conversation](#)

Wednesday, February 7 | 5 PM | Colebrook, NH

Thank you! Updating New Hampshire's Climate Action Plan

[Complete additional feedback form about this work](#)

[All engagement events and info](#)



**University of
New Hampshire**

Carsey School of Public Policy

