

Cape Cod Climate Action Plan: Transportation Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Virtual Meeting No. 3 | December 18, 2020 | 9am-12pm ET

MEETING IN BRIEF¹

On December 18, 2020, the Cape Cod Commission (Commission) held its third meeting engaging stakeholders on the topic of Transportation on Cape Cod to contribute to the development of a Cape Cod Climate Action Plan (CAP). This meeting was the third of three planned meetings with the Transportation working group.

The objectives of the third Transportation meeting were to:

- Recap Meeting No. 2 and the progress to date on the CAP process
- Review revisions to strategies, actions, and steps to include in the Cape Cod Climate Action Plan
- Identify and discuss potential actors to lead on key actions and steps, in light of the Legal and Jurisdictional Analysis
- Identify and discuss appropriate performance measures for assessing progress on CAP actions

This working group helped the Commission develop a plan that addresses the region's contributions to and threats from climate change. After hearing presentations from Commission staff reviewing the proposed CAP purpose Statement, process to date (particularly regarding the Climate Ambassador program and cross-sector stakeholder meeting), and an overview of the Legal and Jurisdictional analysis, working group participants were split into small groups to discuss potential key actors and performance measures for the goals and actions relevant to Transportation.

To view the full presentation slides, please [click here](#).

MEETING NO. 2 RECAP & REFLECTION ON PROCESS TO DATE

Cape Cod Commission Deputy Director, Erin Perry, opened her presentation by providing the working group with the following purpose statement for the Cape Cod CAP:

To identify, study and monitor the causes and consequences of climate change on Cape Cod as a basis to guide and develop science-based policies, strategies and actions that governments, businesses, organizations, and individuals can pursue to:

- *Improve the region's resilience to climate hazards*

¹For additional detail, please visit the Cape Climate Initiative website: <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/climate-change/>

- *Mitigate climate change on Cape Cod through reducing net regional greenhouse gas emissions in support of the framework and targets established by the Commonwealth.*

Ms. Perry reiterated the various components of the CAP process for the working group, noting that there were several pieces that were taking place in parallel with stakeholder engagement, namely participants would hear about the legal and jurisdictional analysis, and be provided with an update on the Climate Ambassadors Program, as well as hearing briefly about the Fiscal and Economic Impacts Analysis.

Ms. Perry then moved to an update that the Commission had issued a call for students to participate in the Climate Ambassadors Program. Ms. Perry noted the Commission had begun connecting with educators across the region to ensure news of the program was widely distributed. She shared that the program would begin with a full group of students in late January. Following this, Ms. Perry provided a brief update on the Cape-wide survey, where she detailed that the survey had been released before Thanksgiving to a randomly selected group of households. She further explained that the Commission was working with the Center for Public Opinion and the Donahue Institute to capture a statistically significant response with this effort.

Finally, Ms. Perry highlighted that the purpose of this third meeting in the working group series was to begin taking action by identifying key actors and performance measures. She also highlighted that the Commission had been working diligently to incorporate working group input and feedback on the actions database, continuing to make amendments and moving towards completing a draft plan. She noted that the Communications & Education Working Group would begin in January. She also indicated that a new Equity Working Group would be established. Working group members were provided with the opportunity to share key reflections and ask any questions. Following this update, there were no questions or comments.

REVIEW UPDATED ACTION PLAN

Cape Cod Commission Transportation Program Manager, Steven Tupper, reviewed the changes made to the Sector strategies, actions, and steps in the actions database. His presentation included how the input from stakeholders has been incorporated, provided a recap of meeting no. 2, and posed several key outstanding questions for the group to discuss.

Mr. Tupper also highlighted the cross-sector meeting that the Commission had held earlier that month, of which the objective was to identify opportunities for advancing climate actions that support multiple regional priorities. He presented the following outcomes of that meeting:

- Make existing incentives to improve energy efficiency more accessible to all residents

- Balance provision of home efficiency data for homebuyers with financial impacts to sellers
- Recoup energy savings for affordable housing projects
- Build in efficiency measures as priorities in publicly funded projects, not expendable options, to serve as examples for others
- Develop strategies for coordinating solar projects with design and community character considerations
- Identify opportunities to ease regulatory barriers for solar projects where appropriate
- Communicate competing values and highlight importance of shifting values and tradeoffs

Following this review, Mr. Tupper recapped the objectives and outcomes of meeting no. 2, which were to identify potential strategies and actions, and then reviewed the resulting themes for discussion and suggested edits and additions that emerged from Meeting no. 2.

Below are the working group member clarifying questions and comments that followed Mr. Tupper's recap presentation. Working group member questions are **bolded** and answers from the Commission are *italicized*, any further comments or questions made by members are in regular text.

- **Would like to see priority parking spaces for EVs at public and private buildings**
 - *CCC: Yes, discussed and would go under the topic of housing and development.*
- **I am concerned about identifying streets that could be more friendly to pedestrians/bikers also as a traffic calming measure, identifying neighborhoods to reduce thru traffic. I do not see this reflected. Could the Commission confirm if that language is incorporated?**
 - *CCC: The commission is certainly looking at the retrofitting of existing roadways to accommodate non-motorists, but you would like to identify specific streets and we can look to add additional language that addresses your point.*
 - **This process has been rough, and I do not see my participation reflected. I do not feel like I have ownership of this process; the language is more yours than mine. If the goal is to get community buy-in I'm happy to contribute, but I don't think buy-in is what is happening here.**
 - *CBI: Language and the way it is presented matters, even if the way it is being presented does not feel as such, your points are still being included. It will be important when the time comes to have your group do this language translation.*
 - *CCC: We understand that communicating this is key, and this is why we're doing a communications group where we can address things like language.*
- **Please include alternatives to asphalt due to the heat island effect for bike trails and parking lots.**
 - *CCC: The Commission can include this.*

- **In reviewing the steps for conversion of streets, all the bullet points are great. However, I could see all of them going into a report and nothing happening. Perhaps I am asking for more granularity than this process is going to produce. Yet, the big barriers to executing cross-regionally is that the towns tend to do these things. If there is going to be improved bicycling infrastructure, it will take more than these steps. I am concerned seeing all the bullet points and wondering how this will be implemented successfully?**
 - *CBI: indicated that the particularly challenging questions of implementation will be covered in this meeting through some of the following discussions.*

Discussion of Key Outstanding Questions

Following his overview, Mr. Tupper then provided a brief introduction to several issues regarding the Transportation section actions and strategies. He then posed the following outstanding critical question(s), which participants were asked to discuss, confirm, and refine, as needed:

- *How can the region significantly increase the share of trips by transit (i.e., access to transit—RTA, car shares, bike shares, sidewalk connections, etc.; enhancements to transit service to make it attract to more individuals; fares/equity considerations)*
- *What actions can be taken specifically at the local and regional level to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles and how would these actions impact equity?*
- *What actions can be taken at the local and regional level to reduce vehicle miles traveled? Do these actions have income-related equity issues?*

Below is a brief synthesis of each of the responses to these outstanding questions.

How can the region significantly increase the share of trips by transit (i.e., access to transit like RTA, car shares, bike shares, sidewalk connections, etc.; enhancements to transit service to attract to more individuals; fare/equity considerations)?

In response to this question, working group members expressed the need to better understand ridership on the Cape including where people are traveling to, as well as what the available resources to do so are. For instance, participants highlighted that in Falmouth the Steamship authority runs shuttle busses that are unable to stop in the most populous parts of town to pick people up because they only deliver people from the parking lot to the Woods Hole facility, bypassing an incredibly busy corridor. Thus, further understanding these kinds of dynamics would facilitate maximizing what is available already and allow for strategic focus on what needs to be added or improved.

Participants also inquired about the capacity to make transit free to seniors to increase ridership. It was noted that accidents and traffic safety incidents are usually related to the age of drivers, so an important piece of increasing accessibility would be to focus some consideration on the elderly population of Cape Cod (e.g., initiatives like “Free Fare Wednesday”).

What actions can be taken specifically at the local and regional level to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles and how would these actions impact equity?

Working group members expressed the necessity to further embrace Cape Cod's tourism economy and invest in public transit that is "unique" and could be considered an attraction (e.g., electric bus).

One member noted that Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) bus routes were quite long and inquired whether it would be possible to shorten routes and provide more frequent service. CCRTA expressed awareness and focus regarding this issue and noted that their mobility manager was working on exploring ways to be provide more direct serve and adding stops in populous areas. It was also clarified that intermodal transportation (RTAs, Peter Pan Busses, etc.) is being encouraged with options like Charlie Card compatibility.

Working Group members also discussed the feasibility and possibility of the steamship authority looking into a transfer to coordinate schedules. Many participants noted the benefits of a dedicate service long-term to Buzzard's Bay, but it was also expressed that efforts to coordinate transport, to, from, in, and around this location had been ongoing for decades. CCRTA noted the advantage created when they convened a multi-modal committee and that this model could be used to better coordinate public transit services on the Cape. Working group members also noted current and future activates that might be beneficial as well, such as: Cape Flyer providing busses to pick up passengers making the connection to Woods Hole, a docking station added to Mass Maritime's facility (to tie in with the train ferry connection once installed). Finally, regarding Buzzard's Bay, it was noted that if/when there is a train connection, it will be prudent opportunity to think about electrification of ferries, which would be a win for all Cape residents and visitors.

What actions can be taken at the local and regional level to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), or driving less? Do these actions have income-related equity issues?

Working group members discussed and highlighted how all the relevant players at the regional and local level need to work together to reduce VMT and further what is required to successfully accomplish this. One participant noted a rejected proposal to reduce VMT by 20% via a four-day work week, and inquired whether the Commission would be willing to model this kind of initiative to facilitate buy-in. A state-required fare policy review was also mentioned as an ongoing effort to incentivize use of public transit, as well as Cape Flyer's inclusion of a bike car with 50-60 racks for riders to work on their bikes while traveling into Cape Cod.

With respect to income related equity issues, it was noted that access to transit resources is often centralized in Hyannis, which creates an accessibility issue for those who are not nearby.

IDENTIFY KEY ACTORS

Cape Cod Commission Deputy Director, Erin Perry, introduced and reviewed a summary of the outcomes of the Legal and Jurisdictional Analysis for the Climate Action Plan. Her presentation of the findings described how it had informed the Actors section of the Plan. In particular, she highlighted the Commission's better understanding of governmental actors through its analysis, providing rationale for focusing the working group members on identifying civic and private actors. Ms. Perry then indicated that there is already a good working understanding of the other actors within the Transportation sector, but she encouraged further feedback regarding additional actors.

Below are working group member clarifying questions and comments that followed this presentation. Working group member questions are **bolded** and answers from the Commission/CBI are *italicized*, any follow up commentary by participants is in regular text.

- **Regarding MEPA, it is possible to build a large project without getting them involved. Unless a state permit is required, MEPA does not trigger anything. Regional/local approval is required, but this often does not happen, or these frameworks are not set up correctly.**
 - *CCC: This is understood and one example of state actions that can be taken. What this framework allows us to understand is how governments can work together. Moreover, if there are gaps, then where is the opportunity to address these through the CAP.*
- **These bullets do not address what the Cape Light Compact (CLC) does. In addition, the question then is, where does the Commission fit in at this level and what is the Commission going to do?**
 - *CCC: CLC has been engaged in this entire process, and the Commission is incorporating actions that they have; they are actively engaged in this effort. Outside of the CAP, the Commission coordinates with CLC regularly. In terms of the Commissions actions, several of these examples apply to actions the Commission can support and take. The Commission Climate Action Subcommittee's consideration of RPP amendments and other actions support this moving forward. There is identification of Commission supported actions as well.*
 - *CBI: This illustrates that the CAP is on the regional level, but that the coordination will be required at more than this. This discussion will show us how to leverage the capacities of these different actors.*
- **Has there been any thought to giving report cards? Without measurable feedback it's hard to know how we're doing.**
 - *CBI: This will be covered in more detail in the performance measures section*

- Sees a scorecard as a valuable tool and a role for the Commission in their creation.
- *CCC: If there is the ability to get the right information out, we want to be help get it out to the public. We have to communicate well and coordinate with existing partners.*
- **I am trying to understand what the Commission can and cannot do? For example an electric car show – how can the CCC participate? What is the Commission’s role in terms of executing this?**
 - *CCC: It depends on the activity. The Commission can play a role, be present, and would be willing to work with organizers. We are open to these conversations as these arise.*

Key Actor Analysis

Following this discussion, participants worked to identify and refine key actors for the actions and steps of the Transportation sector:

- NGOs,
- Private Actors, and
- Scientists/Researchers

The Transportation stakeholder working group participants were then asked to consider:

- *What would need to be done to enlist, mobilize, or support stakeholder groups who had been identified?*
- *What are the opportunities and constraints with regard to individual categories of actors and coordination among them?*

Below is a brief synthesis of each of the responses to these questions.

Mobilizing Identified Stakeholders

Working group members noted several ways in which revenue, funds, or financial support could be used to support stakeholders and projects as they relate to the transportation actions and steps. Ideas through which to do so included: electronic tolling to increasing revenue, in particular a suggestion was made to tier bridge tolls based on income (i.e., to address the issue of people living off the Cape and commuting to work). Other members suggested a gas tax to help promote increasing electric vehicles. Further, participants noted the need to view transportation on the Cape as a service, and one that uses an electric car fleet, therefore contributing to reduce GHGs and VMT by individuals. CCRTA noted its current fleet of 3 electric vehicles and Smart DOT transportation app that encourages ridesharing (pre-covid).

Other working group members noted that the Cape’s idiosyncrasies should be more carefully considered to serve its varying populations including seniors who may need discounts, or bicyclist. One participant noted “the cape does not have a middle class”.

Working group members also surfaced the need to examine how the transition post-covid could be utilized effectively to maximize benefits overall.

Opportunities and Constraints

Working group members in different subsets of the transportation sector noted future and current opportunities that might exist to mobilize or support key actors (i.e., CCRTA, the Steamship Authority, and Cape Air).

- CCRTA noted its current, strategically aggressive marketing efforts across the Cape to keep residents informed of ongoing initiatives.
- The Steamship Authority noted that ferry electrification was on the far horizon given that a regular ferry system is already constrained by limited resources, in particular because are often self-funded. Therefore, the initial capital outlay for an electric ferry would be high. However, it was noted that there are existing incentives at the federal level that would be attainable with support.
- Cape Air reiterated a preliminary opportunity was working to make the trip from the airport to the ferries as efficient and clean as possible. It was also highlighted that electrification of the aviation industry was imminent and ongoing, with the new 10-year plan including increased infrastructure for charging for airplanes, cars, and resiliency during power outages. The predicted benefit of this electrification would be 80% lower operating costs.

IDENTIFY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Cape Cod Commission Transportation Program Manager, Steven Tupper, provided a high-level overview of the performance measures process. He noted that these measures would enable long-term progress while tracking at the short-term scale. He elaborated that the principles of the performance measures were set by the GHG inventory, which in turn were the base line for the inventory to then be revisited to measure progress. Mr. Tupper then detailed that the performance measures would be used to track progress, on at least an annual basis. He further highlighted that the baseline GHG inventory was also linked to other regional plans and initiatives in the region, and thus existing tracking was already in place through the other plans (e.g., the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), Regional Transportation Plan, and Stats Cape Cod). Mr. Tupper revisited the two-part purpose statement, explaining one component prescribed measuring climate resilience and the other was meant to assess how Cape Cod is addressing mitigation through reducing GHGs. Finally, he reviewed the draft performance measures, which are divided into the five focus areas (e.g., Natural Resources & Working Lands, Energy, Transportation, Housing & Development, and Community) along with a key measure from each focus area:

| Focus Area | Draft Key Performance Measure(s) |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Community | Equity Considerations/Balance with other regional Priorities |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Energy | % of Electricity from Renewable Sources |
| Housing & Development | % of Homes/Businesses Heated by Electricity |
| Natural Resources & Working Lands | Acres of Open Space Preserved (sequestration proxy) |
| Transportation | % of Vehicles Powered by Electricity |

Working group members shared tool ideas for tracking progress that stakeholders could access, but also reinforced the importance of the overall process. Participants also made suggestions to reinforce messages and thinking about success, and strategies for communications that would create behavior modification and facilitate collaboration around meeting multiple purposes.

Below are working group member questions and comments that followed Mr. Tupper's presentation. Working group member questions are **bolded** and answers from the Commission are *italicized*.

- **Why not total EVs registered rather than just new vehicles?**
 - *CCC: There are a lot of ways to measure market penetration, both of these measures will be considered going forward. The Registry of Motor Vehicles is working on new data, with the goal to accumulate whatever sources possible. Regarding leased vehicles, there are different ways for individuals to get into the EV market and leasing has its benefits in this space.*
- **In transportation adaptation, does the percentage of isolated roads include ten-year storm surge?**
 - *CCC: Confirmed, this is definitely something the Commission will include and monitor.*
- **These are good performance measures, but this group did not match them with any goals, which might be hard to do. What do these measures mean? How do we approach this?**
 - *CCC: The reason the Commission is doing the Fiscal and Economic Analysis is to understand what it will take to achieve alignment with these goals in our region.*
 - Metrics are supposed to measure progress against the plan. You need to have those for each piece of the plan. It seems like it will be very hard to come up with a plan for each of these metrics. Even if it is initially wrong, it is possible to adjust the plan the Commission begins to start working on implementation and tests how well the metrics apply. With every single metric, there needs to be a plan for what you think it will be over 30 years. You can always adjust the plan, but there is no point in having a metric of there is no goal.
 - *CBI: These goals will likely come from the Commonwealth and goals for 2050s.*

- **How micro/macro is this information? Will we be able to make town-by-town comparisons? Are we looking simply at the region in total?**
 - *CCC: Yes, the Commission has heard from the towns about interest in data at the municipal level. The data will be presented in aggregate, and where we are able to get down to the municipal level we will. However, in some areas the data are just not available.*
- **There ought to be some kind of tool developed to calculate what is saved by not making the drive to a meeting. If we are making the point to commute virtually, the Commission could make a report to show “GHGs emissions saved”. The issue we will have, as Covid-19 becomes better managed, will be having meetings in person again. Unless we start being able to show why we should hold onto this. A Commission-developed tool would be great to distribute to businesses in towns to contribute to publicizing good work in keeping this “score card” idea.**
 - I would like to note that this framework privileges “electric, or don’t bother”. There should be other metrics to balance out switches (i.e., if we all go to electric and drive more, there is a different set of problems, but still related to climate).

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was made during this meeting.

NEXT STEPS & WRAP UP

Cape Cod Commission Chief Planner, Chloe Schafer, described next steps for finalizing the Action Plan, including incorporating findings from the Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis, and developing a plan for implementation. She noted that the Economic and Fiscal Impact Assessment, being conducted by the Eastern Research Group (ERG), would not be completed until early 2021. Ms. Schafer further detailed that for this analysis, ERG was working to examine the fiscal impacts of climate change in the region (including the cost of business as usual), as well as exploring several mitigation scenarios.

Cape Cod Commission Deputy Director, Erin Perry, then provided an overview of timeline and steps remaining after Meeting No. 3 to the drafting of the report, as well as other opportunities for public engagement from the draft to the final report. In particular, that there would be specific focus groups convened to address the outstanding equity questions and communications & education. Finally, Ms. Perry closed by saying that while this third meeting concluded the stakeholder working group portion of the planning process, it did not necessarily end working group member involvement overall. Members were then asked to share final reflections on the process and complete a brief evaluation survey. Prior to adjourning the final meeting of the Transportation Working Group,

Commission staff expressed their gratitude for the time, efforts, and insights of all working group members over the course of the three meetings.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| Participants | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| First Name | Last Name |
| Guy | Busa |
| Tom | Cahir |
| Paul | Cleary |
| Bob | Davis |
| Grove | Harris |
| Lauren | McKean |
| Jim | Wolf |
| Bill | Holcombe |
| Ed | DeWitt |