

Transportation In Belfast Now

- Belfast, and surrounding communities, lack effective transportation options available in more densely developed communities. (Comprehensive Plan Draft, 2021)
- The main mode of transportation in Belfast are private automobiles.
- Belfast, like all of the US, has evolved to support auto transport, to the detriment of walking and bicycling as alternatives (weather permitting). *More about that later!*
- Quasi-Public Transport options include;
 - Mid-Coast Transportation (WCAP) offers an intra-city Belfast Downtown Area Shuttle (DASH) that operates M/W/F 7 times/day for a low fee structure.
 - Mid Coast Transportation offers Inter-city Flex bus service on a once daily basis to and from surrounding towns, with a one-way fare ranging from \$2.00 to \$3.50.
- Bicycling, during 6 months of the year, is growing in popularity.
 - Within the Bypass, there are marked bike lanes on major streets.
 - Bike access from the outlying areas is complicated by Rt1/3.

Future Transportation Options

- Electric Cars and Buses
 - Near term Federal/State Purchase incentive plans (Efficiency Maine, Grants)
 - Anticipated cost reductions as automakers transition and compete.
 - Wide spread adoption must be enabled by increased electric **utility expansion**; home chargers and heat pumps will likely double electric usage.
 - Wide spread public charger installations
- Development of 'Green' fuels: hydrogen and biofuels for hybrid vehicles (long distance heavy transport).
- Expansion of low fee/no fee public bus transport for intra-city, flex, and commuter routes (Mid-Coast Transportation)
 - State/City Trans Pass program for low income.
 - Employer financial support for worker ride share programs.
- Reconfiguring Belfast to promote walking and bicycling.
 - Expand bike lanes.
 - Over/Underpasses for major route crossings where signaling is not permissible.
 - Electric Bike group purchase program for cost reduction.
- Expand Intra-City Rail network (Rockland & Bangor Amtrak spurs).

Transportation Policy Initiatives

- Maine Electric School Bus Program (<https://www.maine.gov/doe/transportation/cleanbus>)
 - US EPA Rebate of \$375K/ bus + \$20K for a charger if on Priority List
 - Belfast RSU71 is not on priority list ?????
 - Non Priority schools eligible for up to \$250K/bus
 - Range: flat ground & 65F = 100 miles class 7
- Efficiency Maine Electric Car Rebates (BEV & PHEB)
 - <https://www.energymaine.com/electric-vehicle-rebates>
 - For eligible vehicles:
 - \$73,000, in the case of an eligible pickup truck or commercial van with an EPA-rated range of 300 miles or more;
 - \$65,000, in the case of an eligible pickup truck or commercial van with an EPA-rated range of less than 300 miles; or
 - \$50,000, for all other eligible
- Large Transportation Infrastructure Projects
 - The (Federal) Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Public Law 117-103) appropriated \$200,798,267 in Transit Infrastructure Grants for Community Project Funding, also known as Congressionally Directed Spending.
 - Mine/Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding
 - Maine DOT Village Partnership Initiative

Transportation Policy Initiatives Continued

- The (Federal)Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)
 - \$234M over 5 years by 2024 for public transportation improvements in Maine.
 - <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>
- \$5M from Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan to expand public transportation and ride sharing programs
- Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310
 - Federal Transit Administration
 - Eligible Recipients: States and designated recipients are direct recipients; eligible subrecipients include private nonprofit organizations, states or local government authorities, or operators of public transportation.
 - Eligible Activities:
 - buses and vans
 - wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices
 - transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling/routing/one-call systems
 - mobility management programs
 - acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement
 - volunteer driver programs
 - building an accessible path to a bus stop, including curb-cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features
 - incremental cost of providing same day service or door-to-door service
 - <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310>