

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE
Committee on Sustainability and Transportation
Councilor Regina Phillips (D3), Chair
Councilor Victoria Pelletier (D2)
Councilor Anna Bullett (D4)

Approved Minutes October 9, 2024

Members Present: Councilor Phillips, Councilor Bullett, Councilor Pelletier

Staff Present: Troy Moon, Erin Ferrell, Greg Jordan, Mike Murray, Kevin Kraft, Jeremiah Bartlett, Masi Ngidi-Brown

Meeting was called to order.

September 11 Minutes

The September 11, 2024 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Sustainability Update

Presented by Troy Moon

Updates were included in the packet and include:

- Announcement of the Home Energy Rebate Program
- Envision Resilience Challenge updates
- Many community engagement events including a Coffee and Climate with Dr Nirav Shah and Park(ing) Day

Councilor Comment on Sustainability Update

Councilor Phillips thanks Sustainability Staff for their recent efforts.

Update on the Development of a Process to review and approve naming of city facilities

Presented by Masi Ngidi-Brown and Greg Jordan

This process is just beginning. The goal is to create a process to guide future requests. Masi and City staff are gathering information from other organizations and municipalities to begin to form a process. A draft process will come back to the committee in the future.

Councilor Comments on the Update on the Development of the Process for Naming City Facilities in Portland

The Councilors thank staff for their efforts and look forward to seeing community engagement involved.

Energy Benchmarking Report

Presented by Erin Ferrell

Portland's Energy Benchmarking Ordinance requires a yearly report to the S&T committee. The report is included in the packets - highlights include:

- Improved compliance and reporting accuracy each year

- Multi-tenant buildings will start reporting in 2026 when whole-building aggregate data is available from the utility.
- Building performance metrics are shared with building owners to encourage efficiency upgrades.

Councilor Comment on Energy Benchmarking Report

The councilors thank staff for their efforts and look forward to the availability of the data access platform to allow multi-tenant buildings to start reporting.

Report on the feasibility study to electrify cruise ship berths

Presented by Troy Moon and CMP staff Meg Sullivan, Jay Chace, Jason Endsley, Chris Morin

Electrifying the ports is part of Portland's climate action plan and this study is just the first step. More and more ports around the country are electrifying and the cruise ship industry is also making this shift. The report is included in the packet and summary includes information on costs of three options to move forward with shore power.

Councilor Comment on the feasibility study to electrify cruise ship berths

Councilor Bullett asks where the power will come from - *it will come from a newly built substation which mirrors the CMP plan but the expedited plan would mean the project customer would be responsible for the cost.* Councilor Bullett asks how other jurisdictions pay for these kinds of projects and if the cruise industry could be a part of it. *Troy mentions that it varies around the country - in Portland, we would encourage the Cruise industry to contribute in some way.* Councilor Bullett notes the importance of the ships being able to use the electrified port before moving forward with an expedited process.

Councilor Phillips asks if this kind of project would include rate increases for rate payers. *If the project is a part of the larger grid investment project, rates would be affected.*

Review proposed lease of space in the Marginal Way Parking Lot for the installation of EV chargers

Presented by Troy Moon

Staff seek support from the Committee members to authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement to lease the Marginal Way Parking Lot space for the installation of EV chargers. If the agreement is approved, Gridweather LLC will provide a monthly payment of \$1,000 for use of the four parking spaces where chargers will be installed. Memo is in the packet.

Public Comment on Marginal Way chargers

No public comment.

Councilor Comment on Marginal Way Chargers

No councilor comment.

Motion to approve the lease in the Marginal Way Parking Lot

Approved unanimously

Vote to approve the lease in the Marginal Way Parking Lot

Approved unanimously

St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail Corridor: Update the committee on the conclusions of MaineDOT's Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council (RUAC) and request the committee make a recommendation to the City Council on preferred use(s) for the corridor.

Presented by Greg Jordan, Kevin Kraft, Jeremiah Bartlett, and Mike Murray

City staff reviewed options for the use of the St Lawrence and Atlantic Corridor. Options include converting the corridor to a mixed-use trail and removing the railway infrastructure, converting the corridor to a trail but leaving the rail infrastructure for potential future use, or keeping the infrastructure and looking further into re-establishing rail service. Presentations and memos were included in the packet.

Public Comment on St Lawrence and Atlantic Rail Corridor

15 community members provided public comment during the meeting with many comments sent in writing before the meeting which were included in the packet. Comments during the meeting included one resident opposing the trail and many supporting the trail options.

Council Comments on St Lawrence and Atlantic Rail Corridor

Councilor Pelletier asks for more data on the support for rail to trail or rail with trail. Casco is holding a neighborhood meeting to gather more feedback before making a decision. Councilor Pelletier notes support for keeping the rail tracks and creating a trail but recommends postponing making a decision.

Councilor Bullett requests seeing a list of where the other towns stand in terms of making a decision on this. Also asks if action needs to be taken on this. *Greg Jordan notes that Cumberland chose to postpone making any decision on this topic. A few other towns decided on rail until trail and at least one has recommended rail and trail. There was a recommendation in 2021 to move forward with trail until rail and the committee could stay with that recommendation. It is not necessary to make a decision before the commission makes their decision.*

Councilor Phillips agrees with Councilor Bullett and asks what has changed since the 2021 recommendation and if there needs to be a new recommendation made and if there should be a workshop. *Greg notes that the 2021 recommendation preceded further assessments including the 2023 assessment. Staff wanted to make sure the committee is still approving the 2021 recommendation. A workshop can happen if the committee would like.*

This item will come back to the committee after staff can do more research and provide more details.

Motion to Adjournment

The motion was moved by Councilor Bullett, and seconded by Councilor Phillips

The motion was accepted unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned