

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ON TRIENNIAL PLAN IV (FISCAL YEARS 2020-2022)

The Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) seeks preliminary comments from interested parties on implementation strategies, budgets, and metrics for the Trust to consider as it develops its next three-year plan (Triennial Plan IV) for the period spanning fiscal years 2020, 2021, and 2022. Interested parties will have another opportunity to submit comments on the draft plan when it is released later this summer.

SECTION 1 – INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Designated Contact Person

Michelle Fenlason, Administrative Secretary
Efficiency Maine Trust
168 Capitol Street, Suite 1
Augusta, ME 04330-6856
Phone: (207) 213-41450
Email: mfenlason@efficiencymaine.com

1.2 Key Dates

RFI Release Date – July 9, 2018
Preliminary Comments Due – July 31, 2018

Note that the Trust has scheduled a public hearing on the draft Triennial Plan IV on August 24, 2018. Interested parties will have until September 10 to submit final comments on the draft plan.

1.3 How to Submit a Response

Responses may be emailed to the designated contact person (see section 1.1), or uploaded at <https://www.efficiencymaine.com/triennial-plan-iv/>, by the due date listed in section 1.2. Please find suggested guidelines below:

1. Cover Letter (1 page maximum)
Briefly describe your organization or personal background (for individuals), including relevant qualifications.
2. Response
Address one or more of the questions listed in section 3.2.
3. Appendices
Where helpful, attach relevant reports, published within the past few years, related to topics covered in the response. Please provide URLs where the documents may be accessed online; where online access is not possible, please provide electronic copies in the response email or upload.

SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The Triennial Plan

Pursuant to Title 35-A, Section 10104(4) of the Maine Statutes, the Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) is directed to develop and approve:

a detailed, triennial, energy efficiency, alternative energy resources and conservation plan that includes the quantifiable [metrics] of performance ... and make a full report of the vote to the commission The triennial plan must provide integrated planning, program design and implementation strategies for all energy efficiency, alternative energy resources and conservation programs administered by the trust, including but not limited to the electric efficiency and conservation programs under section 10110, the natural gas efficiency and conservation programs under section 10111, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Trust Fund under section 10109, ... and any state or federal funds or publicly directed funds accepted by or allocated to the trust for the purposes of [implementing the Efficiency Maine Trust Act].

Further information about what the statute requires of the Trust and Triennial Plan may be found at 35-A MRSA Section 10104(4). For more information about the mandate for harvesting all energy efficiency resources that are cost-effective, reliable and achievable (also referred to as the Maximum Achievable Cost-Effective potential, or “MACE”), see Sections 10110(4-A) and 10111(2) of Title 35-A and prior orders of the Maine Public Utilities Commission in dockets 2015-00175 and 2012-00449.

2.2 Timeline

The Plan will be developed by the Staff of the Trust. The Trust expects to publish a draft Plan in mid-August. The Trust will hold a public hearing to deliver an overview of the Plan and receive comments on August 24, 2018 at 9:00 AM in Portland. The Trust will continue to welcome written comments on the draft through September 10, 2018. After comments have been considered, the Trust Staff will present a final draft to the Board of Trustees for review and approval. The Trust is aiming to file an approved Triennial Plan at the Maine Public Utilities Commission in October or November of this year.

SECTION 3 – REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

3.1 Triennial Plan IV Program Overview

With regard to the program designs for the next Triennial Plan, the Trust Staff envisions retaining the same basic portfolio of programs that are offered under the current plan with minor modifications. Among the contemplated changes for the program portfolio are that the next plan will add a new program to coordinate several initiatives delivered through wholesalers or distributors (as compared to a retail store).

3.2 Questions

At this time, the Trust would welcome written comments and reference materials on any issue relevant to the task of crafting Triennial Plan IV. Analysis of specific topics, or advocacy for particular positions,

will be considered provided that they are relevant. The Trust also invites any written responses that interested parties might submit in response to the following specific questions:

1. We are currently planning to organize our programs into the following categories: C&I Custom; C&I Prescriptive; Small Business Initiative; Distributor Initiatives; Retail Initiatives; Home Energy Savings Program; Low Income Initiatives; and Renewable Resource Fund (Demonstration Program). Are there discrete initiatives that should be added or removed from this list? What alternative approaches to organizing these programs should we consider?
2. The Innovation Program is designed to analyze and demonstrate cost-effectiveness of emerging measures that have reached (or are about to reach) commercialization, and to gain a better understanding of what strategies should be employed to promote the measure if it were to be added to the list of eligible measures through the Trust's regularly offered programs. What emerging technologies or operational or behavioral conservation measures should the Plan consider for future Innovation Program pilot projects?
3. As part of its Public Information and Outreach initiative, the Trust maintains a robust website at www.efficiencymaine.com offering a variety of program descriptions and online tools and videos to help customers select efficient products, locate a vendor, request a rebate, and understand how to operate their efficient products to achieve maximum savings. The Trust also hosts training workshops for various trade professionals and occasionally hosts seminars or symposia on topics related to energy conservation and alternative energy. What improvements should the Plan propose to the Trust's Public Information and Outreach? Is there more we should be doing? In what areas? Can you recommend exemplary cases we might learn from?
4. In prior Plans, the Trust has allocated between 1% and 3% of the program budgets to "EM&V" (Evaluation, Measurement and Verification). Evaluation is a defined term that entails statistically significant analysis performed by independent, third-party contractors. The law requires that a third-party evaluation be performed for every program costing more than \$500,000; the Trust practice is to initiate these evaluations no less often than every three years. Measurement and verification is largely managed by the Trust Staff with assistance from sub-contractors. What is an appropriate budget percentage allocation for this strategic initiative?
5. Preparation of the Plan includes conducting an analysis of the financial benefits and costs of energy efficiency and conservation measures that might potentially be promoted through the Trust's programs. The programs, and program budgets, limit eligibility to those measures for which the analysis shows that the financial benefits exceed the costs, i.e., the benefit-to-cost ratio is greater than 1.0. (We apply the net present value of the benefits and costs to that analysis, and also discount the savings based on freeridership.) Please comment on specific benefits or costs that you believe the Trust is not sufficiently or appropriately taking account of in this analysis.
6. What observations or projections can you offer about Maine's trade professionals (e.g., electricians, plumbers, weatherization installers, heat pump installers, heating technicians, distributors, retailers, architects and engineers, etc.) and their capacity to accommodate growing demand by Maine customers for LED lighting retrofits, weatherization, high-efficiency heating systems, and other conservation measures offered through the Trust's programs?

3.3 Confidential Information

Respondents should be aware that information received in response to this RFI may be considered in the drafting or implementation of the Triennial Plan and will be available to the public. Interested parties who claim that certain information is confidential must label relevant sections or pages as "Confidential Information" and request that the Board of Trustees consider such a designation. See <http://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/35-A/title35-Asec10106.html> for more information on confidential information.

3.4 Disclaimer

This RFI is not a Request for Proposals (RFP), Request for Qualifications (RFQ), or Program Opportunity Notice (PON). Information submitted in response to this RFI may be considered by the Trust for planning and implementing the Triennial Plan. The Trust does not plan to issue a specific RFP, RFQ, or PON based on or related to responses to this RFI.