September 12, 2024

Rhode Island Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4)

Comments on 2025 EC4 Spending Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2025 Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) Spending Plan. While the following written comments are brief, I do feel I have had the chance to express the following feedback verbally as a member of the EC4 Advisory Board (EC4 AB). I would flag that the item to fund the EC4 AB is not on the ranking system within the comment portal. It is critical that both the EC4 AB and the EC4 STAB are provided with the resources to fulfill their duties and to serve and inform all Rhode Islanders.

Acadia Center urges the EC4 and specific agencies to place these spending requests into the context of larger lead by example targets, particularly those laid out in the Governor’s [Executive Order 23-06](https://governor.ri.gov/executive-orders/executive-order-23-06). We urge the state to produce a regular lead by example report on this progress. A serious and sustainable commitment by the state to lead by example and to implement EO 23-06 must involve embedding emission reduction work into the annual budgets of all state agencies. The state’s efforts to lead by example are an important but small piece of the puzzle to meeting the state’s economy-wide Act on Climate targets.

While we acknowledge the importance of agency engagement, the vast majority of EC4 investments proposed are not tackling economy-wide Act on Climate targets. We have ranked those projects that *do* tackle economy-wide emissions reductions as higher priority.

Further, many line items build on past year’s initiatives and investments, and transparency is needed on the extent that past year’s funds have or have not been spent, and their relative impact. Acadia Center is particularly excited to see further refinement of RIDOT’s GHG models and would ask that, if funded, such work be conducted transparently and made available for public feedback.

Finally, we encourage the RI Department of Health to consider piloting energy efficient window heat pump units, rather than air conditioning units, for vulnerable residents in Rhode Island’s core cities. Acadia Center would be eager to support and share best practices of similar programs across the country.

Sincerely,

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**Note:**

Commenters were also asked/required to rank the projects based on priority. Acadia offered the following ranking:

RIDOT model

Transit

PUC staff

RIPTA outreach

DERA match

RIDOH AC

DEM LBE

Energy O&M

School Solar

DEM Lawn equip

Resilient Rhody

Forestry

Resilience TA

DEM Design

DPUC Docket

STEAM grants

RI CHAMP

Beach data