

Actions for Transportation: Overview



Rhode Island is a small state, but most of us still have to get from place to place: to see family, keep appointments, and earn our livings. Some of us take a lot of pride in our cars—the kind of car we can afford or display makes us feel good. Some of us also appreciate driving as a way to feel powerful and fast, get time alone, or even enjoy the landscape.

Transportation—cars, trucks, buses, boats, planes, trains and farm equipment—is also the source of about 40% of Rhode Island’s greenhouse gas emissions. Transportation also contains many opportunities for us to make and demand change, using a combination of new technologies, time-tested strategies, and changes in our own habits.

The infrastructure that supports transportation (roads, bridges, parking lots and parking garages) also causes and/or requires greenhouse gas emissions. The land-use policies that favor private vehicles feed commercial and residential suburban sprawl and create unsafe roadways, and in addition to their greenhouse gas emissions, gasoline- and diesel-burning vehicles emit pollution that damages our lung and cardiac health—especially for children.

This section provides information on how to use transportation with the lowest possible greenhouse gas emissions, and how to demand and support public initiatives that make low-emissions use easier and more common.