



February 6, 2023

Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Transportation

Members of the Legislature,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit our testimony regarding the FY 2024 Executive Budget. Founded in 1852, the American Society of Civil Engineers is America's oldest national engineering society. We represent over 6,000 members in the State of New York.

Last year, we released an updated ***Report Card on New York's Infrastructure***. That report, researched and written by a volunteer committee of more than 70 practicing engineers, found that **New York earned an overall grade of "C"**, meaning the State's infrastructure is in mediocre condition.

Roads

New York's vast network of over 240,000 lane-miles of roadways connect communities and provide a critical economic function. Deferred maintenance has resulted in rough roads, congestion, and safety deficiencies - with drivers footing the bill. While 55% of New York's major highways are rated in excellent or good condition, the remaining nearly half are considered to be in poor or fair condition.

The combination of rough roads and congestion costs motorists a total of \$7.7 billion statewide annually – that's \$759 per driver in NYC, \$423 in Albany, and \$568 in Syracuse.

Bridges

New York State has made significant strides in advancing its bridge program, from high profile replacements of critical lifeline bridges, such as the Governor Mario M. Cuomo and Thaddeus Kosciuszko Bridges, to the reconstruction or replacement of hundreds of smaller bridges to improve resilience to flooding events. However, much more work remains to be done: NYS has over 17,500 road and highway bridges, carrying 176 million vehicles/day, whose combined length could stretch from Albany, NY to Miami, FL. Almost 10% of NYS bridges are in poor condition, which is above the national average; and 637 bridges are posted for less than legal loads.

Transit

New York's more than 100 transit systems face challenges as they grapple with significant maintenance backlogs, the need to become more resilient, and a push to transition away from fossil fuels. Transit systems across the state operate over 16,000 revenue vehicles, more than 1,700 miles of subway and rail track, over 150 miles of tunnels, tens of thousands of stations, bus stops, and landings, and much more. While many agencies have made significant progress over the last decade in modernizing and updating their infrastructure, there continue to be

significant needs, and significant escalation in capital costs continue to keep pace with or exceed new revenue sources, exacerbating an already large funding gap. Today, capital investment needs total approximately \$64 billion through 2024. New York City's Metropolitan Transportation Authority must grapple with a \$62.1 billion state-of-good-repair backlog across its 12-county service region. Upstate and suburban transit agencies will need to address a \$1.7 billion backlog through 2024. Funding is needed to replace thousands of vehicles that will be beyond their service life, modernize subway and commuter rail infrastructure, improve ADA accessibility, transition to zero-emission technology, and much more.

Recommendations to Raise the Grade

The findings of our report card inform the following comments and recommendations:

- More than 85% of highway centerline miles are maintained by local municipalities. However, there is no comprehensive data regarding local road conditions or needs. The most recent comprehensive needs study was completed in 2013. In order to ensure localities are receiving adequate funding and that public dollars are being well-spent, that additional data is necessary.
- The Legislature should evaluate the long-term viability of the current highway and bridge funding streams, and consider alternative revenue mechanisms.
- Enhance Collaboration - State agencies collaborating with local agencies, local agencies collaborating with other local agencies, by providing technical assistance, and bundling projects to gain efficiencies.
- The Bridge-NY program has successfully aided municipalities with additional funding for bridge projects, but also documented the significant need. To date, the program has awarded \$541M to 231 projects; however over 3.5 times that amount has been requested, a fraction of all local bridge needs. The culvert project portion of the program has been even further oversubscribed.
- Assess transit system vulnerability and align capital improvements to increase resiliency to extreme heat, precipitation, and electric grid disruptions
- Address significant escalations in capital costs to narrow the gap between investment needs and funding available.

We encourage you to read the entire report at www.infrastructurereportcard.org/new-york and consider the proposed solutions as you continue to develop the budget.



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