



December 4, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
 Governor of New York State
 Executive Chamber, State Capitol
 Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

The undersigned organizations, representing the full spectrum of New York’s economy, business, labor, industry and municipalities, support a long-term, adequately funded NYSDOT capital program that ensures the safety and efficiency of roads, bridges, and public transportation systems across the State.

Based upon NYSDOT data available since the enactment of the current program, our system is in a state of substantial—indeed, historic—decline, and it is imperative that two immediate steps are taken to rectify the situation. To prevent further deterioration, we urge you to incorporate the following recommendations into the 2025-26 Executive Budget submission and subsequent negotiations:

1. Acknowledge the Ongoing Inflationary Pressures on the Upcoming Year of the NYSDOT Capital Plan: To counter the unprecedented inflation impacting construction costs, allocate an additional \$800 million for ‘core’ projects in the SFY 2025-26 Executive Budget. This funding will sustain programmed projects outlined in the Capital Plan’s Memorandum of Understanding, aim to slow and reverse the decline in condition of NYSDOT road and bridge assets and restore the purchasing power assumed when the plan was developed. To be clear, without an infusion of additional resources, much needed projects will fall out of the NYSDOT capital plan because of the significant and cumulative impact of inflation and cost escalation. This will accelerate the already precipitous decline in the condition of New York’s roads and bridges.

2. Adopt a formal Twenty-Year Needs Multi-Modal Assessment Process for NYSDOT: Based off the structure that best identifies the continuing capital needs of the MTA system, NYSDOT should adopt a similar approach to capturing and addressing future multi-modal system needs and make this information publicly available.

The justification for the aforementioned needs is clear from current departmental reporting. In 2021, you signed landmark legislation that mandates enhanced transparency from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), requiring annual reports on capital program accomplishments as well as the conditions of highways and bridges. These transparency reports underscore, despite generational transportation funding authorized under the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the State’s five-year Capital Plan for NYSDOT, both pavement and bridge conditions are deteriorating at an alarming rate. By the end of the current historic NYSDOT Capital Plan, New York is projected to have the worst pavement and bridge conditions in decades.

Key findings from the most recent Annual Highway Pavement and Bridge Conditions Report include:

NYSDOT Bridge Conditions

- **All 11 NYSDOT regions reported declines in bridge conditions**, which is unprecedented.
- An additional 138 bridges have transitioned from good to fair or poor condition, bringing the total number of structures in fair or poor condition - based on federal criteria - to nearly 11,400 or 65 percent.
- Overall investments in bridge safety assurance declined nearly 20 percent year-over-year.

NYSDOT Pavement Conditions

- Seven of 11 NYSDOT regions experienced declines in pavement conditions.
- An additional 630 lane miles maintained by NYSDOT have shifted from good to fair and poor condition, raising the statewide total in fair or poor condition to nearly 17,000 lane miles (more than 40 percent).
- Overall investments in pavement renewal have decreased by more than 31 percent year-over-year.

Overall NYSDOT Capital Investment

- Total NYSDOT Capital Plan spending declined by nearly \$200 million year-over-year.
- Compounding the decline in pavement and bridge conditions, nearly 40 percent of the \$3.3 billion encumbered by NYSDOT from the Capital Plan last year was allocated to activities that did not improve system conditions.

These findings underscore the urgent need for increased investment in transportation infrastructure. The decline of New York's transportation infrastructure poses a serious risk to public safety and the state's economic competitiveness. Without adequate funding in the upcoming budget proposal, these challenges will only escalate, leading to more costly repairs and diminished quality of life for New Yorkers. We urge you to prioritize the necessary investments to reverse these trends and ensure a sustainable, safe transportation network for the future.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Elmendorf II, President & CEO
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New York State

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