



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

January 16, 2018

The Honorable Mark McConkey
Chairman
House Public Works and Highways Committee
State House
107 North Main Street, Rm 302
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman McConkey:

Pursuant to RSA 228:99 and RSA 240 of the Laws of New Hampshire, enclosed are two copies of the draft 2019-2028 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan (Ten Year Plan) for the State of New Hampshire.

The Department of Transportation ("NHDOT") first met with the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation ("GACIT") on July 19, 2017 to kick off the process for the update of the 2019-2028 Ten Year Plan, and to receive strategic direction from GACIT on a number of policy issues regarding funding, financial constraint, and unfunded needs on the turnpike system and across the State. NHDOT prepared and presented a financially constrained Ten Year Plan for 2019-2028 to GACIT on August 23, 2017.

GACIT held twenty-three (23) public hearings throughout the state in September and October, with the final one being held on October 26, 2017. Written comments were accepted for an additional ten days after the last meeting (November 6, 2017). Some of the themes expressed repeatedly at the hearings included: concern with the projected deteriorating condition of the State's bridges and pavements, the need to continue to address infrastructure condition including pavements, bridge, safety and congestion; fuller consideration of alternative modes of transportation including rail, transit, bike/ped projects and aeronautics, and the need to consider corridor studies, complete streets approaches to projects and funding to properly meet the identified but unfunded needs.

NHDOT then met with each of the GACIT members individually to review the comments in each Council District. On November 22, 2017 GACIT met as a full group and GACIT provided direction to NHDOT about which projects and changes they wanted addressed in the Plan. As has been publicly reported, NHDOT was asked to prepare a proposal for acceleration and expansion of turnpike capital program with a toll increase.

In order to ensure that the public had adequate opportunity to weigh in on the proposed toll increase, three additional Public Hearings were held to gather input on the toll proposal. These hearings were held in Portsmouth (December 4), Concord (December 12) and Manchester (December 13). Through these hearings and my own travels around the State, I heard many concerns regarding the proposed toll increase, including but not limited to concerns with the decision making process, the timing of this decision and public input, and the potential financial impact on business and lower income residents.

After listening to arguments regarding the proposed toll increase from all sides, I determined that a toll increase is not in the best interests of New Hampshire at this time, particularly for our lower income and transient residents. I therefore declined to put the proposed toll increase on the Governor and Council agenda. Removal of the toll increase did not prevent us from including additional and accelerated funding for top priority projects that will benefit all regions of the State.

I am confident that we can address the State's transportation needs while living within our means. The combined work of NHDOT, GACIT, and my office has resulted in a Draft Ten Year Plan that focuses on preservation, maintenance and safety of the existing pavement and bridge infrastructure throughout the state. The draft Plan is financially sound, as it assumes a level federal funding of about \$185 million per year, does not include accelerated project schedules that depend on a toll increase, and relies on turnpike toll credits in lieu of a State hard match to the Federal program. The Plan also addresses the highest priorities developed by each Regional Planning Commission. In all, the final product is a financially constrained document that identifies and addresses the needs that best align with the priorities of communities, the Regional Planning Commissions, NHDOT, and GACIT.

I hereby present this recommended update to the Ten Year Plan for 2019–2028. As you review the Plan document and other supporting information, both my staff and NHDOT staff are available for any input you feel is needed.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Sununu
Governor

Enclosures

1. Governor's Recommendations for the Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan 2019-2028

cc: The Honorable Gene Chandler, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Chuck Morse, President of the Senate
Executive Council