Traffic and Revenue Highlights

Traffic has begun to trend upward by about 0.5% over last year. This is particularly noticeable on the weekends as out-of-state customers and New Hampshire residents enjoy the great summer opportunities and destinations. Revenue at the Hampton Toll Plaza, following the toll raise July 1, 2009, has been higher than expected and August is anticipated to again be the peak month for traffic.

For FY 2010, there was a total of 108.3M vehicle transactions, representing a 0.6% growth over FY 2009, with a total revenue of $116.6M, representing a growth of 11.3% over FY 2009. Both totals represent unaided traffic and revenue.

Looking at the ten-year period of FY 2000 to FY 2010, vehicle transactions increased by 9.0%, with 8.9M more transactions in FY 2010 than FY 2000. Revenue increased 94% with $56.4M more revenue in FY 2010 than FY 2000.

The Hampton Main Toll Plaza and the Hooksett Main Toll Plaza represent the largest plazas in terms of revenue and vehicle transactions with Hooksett putting through 24.5M vehicle transactions, with $23.5M in revenue and Hampton through-putting 22.4M vehicle transactions with $48.6M in revenue for FY 2010.

Turnpike System Annual Traffic (Fiscal Year Comparisons)

These projects are considered priorities to address deficient bridges and improve safety and congestion on the Turnpike System. Recent (on July 14, 2010) the Governor and Executive Council awarded a $50.3M contract to the Cianbro Company for the construction of the new Little Bay Bridge. This contract is the first of five construction contracts (estimated to total over $215M) which will reconstruct a 3.5 mile segment of the Spaulding Turnpike from Exit 1 in Newington to Exit 6 in Dover. This project will eliminate the chronic congestion of the Little Bay Bridges as well as improve safety and transportation efficiency.

Construction work continues aggressively on the Rochester Spaulding Turnpike Extension project with phase 1 construction at Exits 11 and 12 finishing this year and four other construction contracts at Exits 11 through 15 underway. The Rochester Project which totals nearly $128M in construction is approximately 40% complete and expected to be completed in the fall of 2013.

Newington-Dover Little Bay Bridges & Spaulding Turnpike Construction

- Construction planned to start July 2010
- Construction completion planned for fall 2017
- 5 Construction contracts involved
- Improves safety and capacity
- Total estimated construction cost $125M
- Total project cost $260M

These two major projects on the Spaulding Turnpike will forever change travel on the Turnpike and have long-lasting, positive effect on the region’s commerce, commuting and tourism.

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Trafficway Highlights

Revenue Highlights

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Trafficway $ Hard at Work for Our Customers

The Capital Program has 9 construction contracts that are or will be underway this summer as part of projects in Rochester, Merrimack, Concord, Hampton, Newington and Dover. This construction work totals nearly $200M.

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Summer Operations

Road safety and aesthetics often go hand-in-hand. For the Bureau of Turnpikes Maintenance crews, there is a strong sense of pride on how they keep New Hampshire’s Turnpikes safe and in good condition.

An example of the excellent work performed on and around the three turnpikes is street sweeping. Among those who perform this important function, Rick Merrill, Assistant Patrol Foreman at the Hampton Maintenance Shed, recently took time to demonstrate the intricacies of street sweeping.

The sweeper, which operates with a hydrostatic transmission and a series of hydraulic systems, plays a vital role of removing dirt and other debris that can be both unsightly and hazardous to vehicles. Merrill described how he particularly feels what he does assists motorists with good, safe driving conditions. The Bureau of Turnpikes maintains two sweepers—a mechanical drive sweeper and a vacuum-based sweeper. The functional difference between the two is that the mechanical unit is better suited for picking up large debris while the vacuum unit is better suited to pick up fine debris.

To help maintain the equipment, the unit is washed out after about every two days of use. This helps to keep wiring and other sensitive parts free from debris buildup.

Of course, there is a lot of summer maintenance items on the to-do list for the crews based not only in Hampton but also Nashua, Hooksett, Merrimack and Dover. Among the recurring summer maintenance items, pavement patching, clearing brush and branches for sight distance and sign visibility, guard rail repair and mowing take a considerable amount of effort and the crews are always up for the task. Long days, rolled up sleeves, coordination and a lot of sweat go into keeping the Turnpikes roads among the best in the Northeast.

Motorists are reminded to abide by New Hampshire’s recently strengthened “Move Over Law” (RSA 265:37-a) that requires “a wide berth, without endangering oncoming traffic, to public safety personnel, any persons in the roadway, and stationary vehicles displaying blue, red or amber emergency or warning lights.” This includes NHDOT personnel and equipment in the process of handling incidents roadside or in the traveled way when using flashing amber lights.

The Benefits of Open Road Tolling

Open Road Tolling brings many great benefits to the State and to individual motorists. Among these, four key advantages stand out:

1. Improved level of service to E-ZPass customers (limiting traffic back-ups and congestion)
2. Environmental benefits (reduced air emissions)
3. Safety enhancements (no stopping or last-second lane switching)
4. Short and long term economic benefits to New Hampshire (local material and labor utilized, improved commerce)

With larger percentages of New Hampshire Turnpikes’ customers opting for E-ZPass, congestion is reduced and motorists who have NH E-ZPass accounts enjoy a 30% savings on the tolls (10% for business accounts).

It is estimated that traffic queues at the Hampton Toll plaza, for instance, will be reduced by as much as 80% on summer-time Sundays with emissions reduced by as much as 20%. Along with that is a decrease of gasoline consumption by 23% on those same days.

Motorists already are appreciating the dramatic savings of time they experience going through the ORT lanes of Hampton. It was affirming to see on the first weekend of being opened (Memorial Day weekend) motorists, including trucks, driving through, honking their horns and giving the “thumbs-up” sign. Clearly, New Hampshire customers are enjoying the benefits of ORT with many e-mails with simple “thank-yous”, “great job”, and “fantastic” being received.

The Hampton ORT project brought much needed work to NH-based companies during a time when construction typically winds down (October-April). (continued on page 3)

The Road Ahead

NH E-ZPass Starts New Invoice System

Effective with all new transactions, as of 12:01am, July 1, 2010, the NHDOT changed how it handles unpaid transactions in E-ZPass lanes. Previously, motorists with unpaid transactions, that could not be billed to a valid E-ZPass account, were mailed violation notices that required both the toll amount plus a $25.00 administrative fee per unpaid transaction. Consistent with an effort to be more customer-focused, these same unpaid transactions will be assessed a $1.00 per transaction processing fee, in addition to the toll.

Customers will receive these invoices in the mail, similar to the old violation notices.

Customers have 30 days to pay the invoice. If no payment is received, a late notice will be mailed, the $1.00 per transaction will become $3.00 per transaction and there will be an additional 30 days to pay. If the payment is still not received within this second 30 days, the unpaid transaction becomes a violation, subject to the same $25.00 per transaction that has previously been assessed to violations.

E-ZPass continues to be popular with customers and grow toward the 70% market share goal maintained by the Bureau of Turnpikes. As of May 31, 2010, there were 239,288 NH E-ZPass accounts with 410,708 transponders in use. 97.71% were private accounts, 2.26% were business accounts, with 0.03% representing other types of government-use accounts.

E-ZPass usage for FY 2010 (or July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010) represents 60.7% of cars and 80.6% of trucks, for a total 60.1% system-wide of the vehicle transactions on New Hampshire’s Turnpikes. This growth represents an increase of 2.2% over FY 2009.

There are several, easy ways to connect with E-ZPass Customer Service to open or maintain E-ZPass accounts: online at www.EZPassNH.com, calling 1-877-643-9727, or by visiting one of our three Walk-In-Centers (WIC’s) between the hours of 10am and 6pm, Monday through Friday.

WIC’s are located in Portsmouth, at the Pease International Transport, Nashua, next to the Exit 6 Welcome Center, and Hooksett on the northbound side of Rt. 93, just north of the Hooksett Toll Plaza. The Hooksett and Nashua WIC’s, presently located in trailers, will likely be relocated to permanent facilities in 2010.

Locations and addresses can be viewed on our E-ZPass website, www.EZPassNH.com, along with other pertinent WIC information such as hours of operation.

Benefits of ORT (Cont’d.)

Among the highlights, between 35-40 workers were on site working on any given day. At least 2 subcontractors were working on the project at all times. Over 50,000 man-hours were used to complete the construction phase of the project. Over $4 million dollars of New Hampshire-based materials and products were used on the project.

As nearly 10% (2.0 million) of the commercial vehicles use the I-95 corridor annually, their reduced delays will immensely improve commerce in the area.

Aerial photo of the new Hampton Toll Plaza Open Road Tolling system on I-95