

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Executive Council

STATE HOUSE ROOM 207

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03301

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CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU, GOVERNOR

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JOSEPH D. KENNEY
CHRISTOPHER C. PAPPAS

ANDRU VOLINSKY
DAVID K. WHEELER

December 20, 2017

His Excellency, Christopher T. Sununu
Governor of New Hampshire
State House
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu:

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 first met with the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation on July 19, 2017 to kick off the update of the 2019-2028 Ten Year Plan process, 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. Based on this direction, the Department developed a Draft Ten Year Plan that focused on preservation, maintenance and safety of the existing pavement and bridge infrastructure throughout the state. It addressed financial constraint, assuming level federal funding of about \$185 million per year, with continued reliance on turnpike toll credits in lieu of State hard match to the Federal program. The draft plan addressed the highest priorities developed by each Regional Planning Commission. The result was a financially constrained document identifying the needs that best aligned with the priorities of communities, the Regional Planning Commissions and the Department. 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 include: 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; the need to develop a sound wall program for those areas where noise from the highway impacts adjoining

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neighborhoods; 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 the Department about which projects and changes they wanted addressed in the Plan. A summarized listing of the projects that were discussed with each of the members and the recommendations made about each project is attached to this letter for your reference. Additionally in response to concerns regarding the projected increase in red-list bridges, extended timeframes for major turnpike projects, and neighborhoods suffering from highway noise, Councilor Prescott asked the Department to prepare a proposal for acceleration and expansion of turnpike capital program with a toll increase. This proposal (attached) would accelerate major turnpike capital projects by three to six years, fund a Type II sound wall program, and include study of future needs of the Turnpike system.

Subsequently, with concerns being expressed about the need for more public input, three additional Public Hearings were held to gather input on the toll proposal. Hearings to discuss the toll proposal were held in Portsmouth (December 4), Concord (December 12) and Manchester (December 13). The goal of these additional hearings was to provide additional opportunity for the public to comment on the proposed toll increase and acceleration and expansion of the turnpike capital program.

Public comment was generally split. Those not supporting the toll increase expressed concerns about the need for accelerating the projects, the decision making process, the timing of this decision and public input, and the potential financial impact on business and lower income residents. Those supporting the toll increase cited the critical need to advance these projects to address safety and congestion, potential positive economic growth benefits, the reasonableness of the toll increase, the need to address highway noise impacts, and timeliness of delivering these projects.

GACIT has recommended by a 3-2 vote that this Draft 2019-2028 Ten Year Plan include the accelerated turnpike projects to be supported by a corresponding toll increase.

We believe this completes the Commission's work on this step in the update for the State's Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan. The Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) hereby presents this recommended update to the Ten Year Plan for 2019-2028. As you review the Plan document and other supporting information, we are available for any input you feel is needed, and we stand ready to assist you in preparing the next step in the Plan.

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Sincerely,

Executive Councilor Joseph D. Kenney

Executive Councilor Russell E. Prescott

Executive Councilor Andru Volinsky

Executive Councilor Christopher C. Pappas

Executive Councilor David K. Wheeler

Commissioner Victoria F. Sheehan

Enclosures

1. GACIT Adopted 2019-2028 Ten Year Plan
2. Summary list of project changes
3. Compilation of Public Testimony
4. Proposal for Acceleration and Expansion of Turnpike Capital Program dated 11/22/17

cc: William J. Cass, Assistant Commissioner, NH Department of Transportation
Christopher M. Waszczuk, Deputy Commissioner, NH Department of Transportation
Peter E. Stamnas, Director of Project Development, NH Department of Transportation
William E. Watson, Administrator, Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance, NHDOT
GACIT members

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