

A SAFER ROAD TO TOMORROW

January 2008 Newsletter

Highway Plan Goes on A Diet

Every two years, the 10-Year Highway Plan is reviewed and revised. First, in the even years, the Regional Planning Commissions request proposals for new road and bridge projects. These projects are ranked by established criteria. Then in the odd years, each of the RPCs makes a written draft presenting the prioritized projects to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. The DOT puts together a revised statewide 10-Year Plan collating and organizing the information on projects from all the RPCs. This plan goes to the Governor's Commission on Intermodal

Transportation (GACIT). This commission holds a number of public hearings, amends the 10-Year Plan, adding and deleting projects, and finally, submits it to the Governor. The Governor reviews the plan, then submits it to the Legislature for approval.

The 2007-2016 funding plan did not anticipate the 45% increase in construction costs over the past few years. It could take 35 years to build the \$4.1 billion worth of projects. The proposed 2009-2018 plan proposed a drastic decrease in expenditures. It happened like this:

On November 28th, the GACIT Highway Fund Committee approved by a 5 to 1 vote a new 10-Year Highway Plan. In the hopes that "a new highway construction plan will help return honesty and fiscal responsibility to New Hampshire's highway planning," Governor John Lynch had called on Interim Transportation Commissioner Charles O'Leary to make the plan "fiscally responsible." The result was that the \$4.1 billion price tag for road and bridge construction and improvement was cut in half in the revised plan.

Continued on Page 3...

2008 Calendar Released

It is again calendar season at A Safer Road to Tomorrow. We've put a new spin on the calendar this year. Our first one distributed in 2006 focused on the damages caused by the Alstead floods. The 2007 calendar focused on the southern portion of the state, particularly I-93. The focus of this year's calendar is statewide, and the purpose is to inform the public and Legislature about the nature and scope of deficiencies in the state's highways and bridges, and their immediate and long-term impact on public safety, the economy, and our quality of life. It is our hope that if people understand the transportation problems, then they can thoughtfully evaluate and contribute to effective solutions.

A large percentage of the state's roads have suffered due to lack of sufficient funding, and are at the point where each year of neglect will result in a much more rapid rate of deterioration – and ultimately, a much higher repair bill. A Safer Road to Tomorrow hopes that this new calendar will prompt awareness, discussion, and solutions. Extra calendars are available at the partner locations.



A SAFER ROAD
TO TOMORROW

Safety · Quality of Life · Economic Development

48 Grandview Road, Bow, NH 03304
Phone: 603.225.2701 Fax: 603.226.3859

Email: info@saferoadsnh.com

Web: www.saferoadsnh.com

Safer Road Partners

Associated General Contractors of New Hampshire

The Associated General Contractors is a non-profit trade organization of general contractors, subcontractors, and industry professionals dedicated to improving the professional standards of the construction industry.

NH Good Roads Association

New Hampshire Good Roads Association is a non-profit trade organization established to encourage the development of a safe, efficient and environmentally sound highway transportation system in New Hampshire.

Safety and Health Council of Northern New England

The Council's mission is to educate and promote safety & health policies, practices and procedures that prevent and mitigate human economic losses arising from unintended causes.

New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police

The Association secures a closer official and personal relationship among commanding officers of all New Hampshire, to encourage a cordial and cooperative relationship among all police officials.

New Hampshire Lodging and Restaurant Association

The Association is a statewide, non-partisan trade organization. Our mission is to promote, protect and educate the food service and lodging industries of the state and to ensure positive business growth for our members.

NH Municipal Bridges Rank 6th Worst in Country

Better Roads Magazine recently came out with its 2007 Bridge Inventory spreadsheet. The spreadsheet shows the number of bridges in each state. The bridges are broken into two categories: state and municipal. Each category shows the number of structurally deficient/functionally obsolete bridges. "Structurally deficient bridges are considered more serious, since they have structural problems that require limiting weight or more frequent inspections. Functionally obsolete bridges may be in good condition, but don't meet the needs of current traffic."*

"Nationally, little progress has been made over the past year. The percentage of structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges improved by .4%."* According to the inventory, New Hampshire is the 13th overall worst state, tied with Maine and Louisiana. With a total of 2,428 bridges, 1,496 are state and 932 are municipal. Twenty-two percent, 322, of the state bridges are structurally deficient/functionally obsolete; 44%, 413, of the municipal bridges are structurally deficient/functionally obsolete. "New Hampshire's bridge conditions improved slightly over the past year, with the percent of structurally deficient or functionally obsolete

bridges decreasing to 30% from 31%. The 735 substandard bridges are divided nearly equally between structurally deficient (51%) and functionally obsolete (49%)."* New Hampshire has moved from 5th worst to 6th worst overall for municipal bridges in 2007 with Pennsylvania moving into 5th place since last year.

The tables below show NH's ranking. To view the 2007 spreadsheet, go to <http://obr.gcnpublishing.com/articles/bridgeinv07.htm>.

	Total City/County/ Town Bridges	Total SD/FO	Percent
West Virginia	115	82	71%
Delaware	7	4	57%
Maine	211	117	55%
Rhode Island	167	87	52%
Pennsylvania	6,913	3,152	46%
New Hampshire	932	413	44%

	Total All Bridges	Combined Total SD/FO	Percent
Rhode Island	773	413	53%
DC	217	89	41%
Pennsylvania	23,533	9,360	40%
Hawaii	1,156	459	40%
New York	17,391	6,625	38%
West Virginia	6,931	2,534	37%
Vermont	2,683	958	36%
Massachusetts	5,050	1,826	36%
Connecticut	4,156	1,363	33%
Oklahoma	23,666	7,359	31%
North Carolina	18,042	5,602	31%
Missouri	24,017	7,326	31%
New Hampshire	2,428	735	30%

**Better Roads Magazine*, November issue

Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan Proposed



On Tuesday, October 30, there was a public hearing on Senate Bill 84, which establishes procedural requirements to improve implementation of a

6-Year Transportation Improvement Plan.

This legislation comes after 2 years of study to modify the current 10-Year Transportation Improvement Plan by changing it to a 6-year plan. The benefits of a 6-year plan are that it gives more control over the planning process while still

reviewing projects every 2 years and adjusting them for inflation; and it expands the advisory committee to 13 members, which involves key financial decision makers of the legislature earlier on in the process.

Associated General Contractors of New Hampshire's Executive Vice President Gary Abbott stated at the hearing that he has testified for many years that the 10-Year Highway Plan was not realistic, either in terms of the number of projects or available financing. The more realistic 6-year term ensures financial

accountability; and the expanded advisory committee should give more balance of a statewide review. Commissioner O'Leary concluded by stating that this will be the first time standards are set in state statutes where projects will have to meet specific hurdles before being added to the plan. For any proposed project, these standards include safety, multimodalism, land use, infrastructure preservation, and overall corridor improvement.

The full House will consider this legislation in early January.

Continued from Page 1...



The new plan cuts many projects; however, eighty-nine Red Listed bridges will be repaired, and the money remaining in the fund after their repair, about

half of it, will be used for repairing roads with a focus on Interstate 93 in southern NH, and the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport access road.

Governor Lynch wants to bond \$114 million to put some of the projects that were cut back into the plan. These projects include:

- Barnstead/Alton – Route 28: Intersection safety improvements from the Alton Circle south
- Belmont/Laconia – Route 106: Reconstruction
- Colebrook – Route 26: Bridge rehabilitation

- Conway – Route 16: Conway bypass, landscape
- Jefferson/Randolph – Route 2: Reconstruction, safety improvements, and shoulder widening
- Keene/Swanzey – Routes 9, 10, 12, 101: Interim intersection improvements
- Madison/Conway – Route 16: Conway Bypass earthwork project, bridge construction, southern segment final construction
- Nashua – Route 190: Broad Street reconstruction
- Ossipee – Route 16: Intersection improvement
- Peterborough – Route 202: Reconstruction
- Plaistow/Kingston: Route 125: Reconstruction
- Walpole/Bellows Falls, VT – Bridge Street: Bridge rehabilitation
- Wilton/Milford/ Amherst/Bedford - Route 101: Safety improvements

He will review the latest proposal and send it to the Legislature in January 2008.

NH Good Roads Joins Safer Roads Coalition



A Safer Road to Tomorrow coalition is pleased to announce that on November 6th, 2007, New Hampshire Good Roads Association joined as a member.

New Hampshire Good Roads Association has existed since 1904, and its mission, “to encourage the development of a safe, efficient and environmentally sound highway transportation system in New Hampshire” is very much like that of Safer Roads. They encourage, for examples, the reconstruction of I-93 and the replacement of Red List bridges. Their members include engineers, contractors and suppliers, industrial firms, and corporate businesses.

The coalition looks forward to a long and productive relationship with the New Hampshire Good Roads Association.

Some of the Major Projects Sidelined 10-Year Plan

Below is a list of some of the projects removed from the Plan on November 28th.

- Albany/Madison – Route 16: Reconstruction
- Alton/Gilford – Route 11: Reconstruction
- Atkinson – Route 111: Reconstruction
- Bedford – Route 101: Widen to 5 lanes
- Belmont – Route 140: Upgrade
- Bow/Concord – I-93: Widen
- Derry/Londonderry – I-93: Construction of Exit 4A
- Dummer/Cambridge/Errol – Route 16: Widen and rehabilitate
- Fitzwilliam – Route 12: Reconstruction
- Lisbon – Route 302: Rehabilitate
- Litchfield/Merrimack – Routes 3 and 3A: Merrimack River crossing
- Manchester/Hooksett/Bow – Route 3A: Safety, shoulder, and intersection improvements
- Meredith – Route 106: Reconstruction and addition of shoulders
- Milan/Dummer – Route 16: Upgrade and reconstruct
- New Hampton/Meredith – Route 104: Reconstruction and shoulder widening
- Newport/Goshen/Lempster/Marlow – Route 10: Reconstruction
- Portsmouth – Route 1: Reconstruction
- Stratford – Route 3: Reconstruction and widening

Stop the Transfers

The State of New Hampshire receives Highway Funds through various means to maintain and build roads and bridges. “Various means” includes tolls on state roads and gas tax. A significant amount has been received in the past 5 years from 2003 to 2007, ranging from a low of \$215,000,000 to a high of \$273,000,000. It is clear from the chart on the last page that this money does not all go toward its intended purpose.



Transfers are moneys taken from funds earmarked for maintenance and construction of roads and bridges. These funds go to other agencies like Aid to Cities and Towns, Department of Safety, Health and Human Services, District and Municipal Courts, and the Department of Justice to name a few.

In 2003, transfers to these agencies reduced the Highway Fund by 36%; in 2004, by 39%; in 2005, by 43%; in 2006, by 43%; and in 2007, by 38% (due to bonding, as noted in the lower part of the chart). The total dollar amount of these transfers has increased every year. These moneys are “diverted” from their original purpose, and fewer roads and bridges are repaired and constructed each year.

Governor John Lynch said in February of 2006, “State agencies must stop using the highway funds like an ATM. We need to revisit which agencies receive highway funds, and for what purposes. We need to restore financial accountability and oversight of the highway fund.”

Even more accountability is needed to fully fund the 10-Year Highway Plan.



A Safer Road to Tomorrow
 48 Grandview Road
 Bow, NH 03304

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE							
HIGHWAY FUND							
Transfers to Other Agencies							
	2003	2004	2005	2006	Actual 2007	Budget 2008	Budget 2009
NET Highway Fund Appropriations	225,320,000	218,344,000	214,987,000	228,442,000	273,447,000	265,791,000	275,445,000
Less Transfers							
Aid to Cities and Towns	27,292,298	27,238,545	29,450,081	28,819,383	28,456,617	29,100,000	29,100,000
Department of Safety	50,078,124	52,938,739	59,347,425	66,652,833	70,555,061	77,824,240	79,773,782
Health & Human Services	1,192,860	747,123	376,242	356,622	367,215	496,572	479,397
District & Municipal Courts	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,505,650	1,709,886	2,000,000	2,000,000
Administrative Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Superior Court	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-
Environmental Services	51,443	57,912	94,878	40,000	41,805	35,000	36,000
Highway Safety	362,601	414,034	415,983	377,894	400,401	484,742	493,909
Department of Justice	599,717	911,465	849,397	923,045	986,426	1,038,466	1,053,413
Tax & Land Appeals	152,538	129,296	155,297	170,704	164,044	245,116	247,249
Cultural Affairs	106,520	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office of Emergency Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Transfers	81,836,101	84,437,114	92,689,303	98,846,131	102,681,455	111,224,103	113,201,750
\$ Increase Over Prior Year	4,206,250	2,601,013	8,252,189	6,156,828	3,835,324	8,542,648	1,977,647
% Increase Over Prior Year	5%	3%	10%	7%	4%	8%	2%
Transfers As % of Net Appropriations	36%	39%	43%	43%	38%	42%	41%
Office of Information Technology	-	-	-	3,790,118	4,098,972	4,744,797	4,902,944
\$ Increase Over Prior Year					308,854	645,825	158,147
% Increase Over Prior Year					8%	16%	3%
0401080101 Class 049 Turnpike Transfer:							
Department of Safety	3,841,036	3,927,547	4,066,964	4,510,403	5,215,681	5,563,677	5,700,748
Note: HB 25 Ch 228, L07, also provides \$59,895,260							
in additional funding as follows:							
Consolidated Federal funds-State Match						27,695,260	
Betterment						15,000,000	
State Highway Construction Aid						3,600,000	
Municipal Bridge Program						13,600,000	

Brought to you by
 the Safer Roads
 Partners:



Safety & Health Council
 of Northern New England