

**New York State Thruway Authority**  
**Annual Highlights - 2017**

**Overview**

***New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA)***

The 570-mile New York State Thruway, operated by the Thruway Authority, has served as the central artery of the state's transportation system for nearly six decades. In 2017, more than 250 million motorists traveled more than eight billion vehicle-miles on the Thruway system.

The Thruway is renowned for being among the safest and most reliable superhighway systems in the country. Throughout the history of the system, toll revenues have been the primary source of funds to support Thruway operations, maintenance and capital investments.

**Thruway by the Numbers**

- **53,857** special hauling permits issued to oversize and overweight vehicles
- More than **35 million visitors** to the Thruway's 27 service areas
- **270,370 square feet** of highway pavement repaired
- More than **73 million gallons** of gasoline and diesel fuel sold at Thruway service areas
- **49,226** roadside service calls received by the Thruway Statewide Operations Center
- **183,291 tons** of salt and **404,472 gallons** of anti-icing agents applied during winter maintenance season
- **250,087 staff hours** spent and **2,211,503 miles** traveled conducting snow and ice operations
- More than **140,000 tickets** issued by New York State Police Troop T, including but not limited to:
  - **68,093** for speeding
  - **2,826** for cell phone usage
  - **1,932** for texting while driving
  - **5,012** for no seatbelt
  - **3,317** for violating the ***Move Over Law***
- **10,455** accidents investigated
- **3,253** criminal and **1,092** DWI **arrests** made by Troop T

### ***Enhancements to Winter Operations***

In preparation for the 2017-2018 winter season the Authority enhanced its winter maintenance program in several key areas. These included:

- Created a stronger fleet and a reserve capacity through the addition of 55 large plow trucks and 10 tow plows
- Enhanced staff resources through the addition of permanent staff and the development of an improved retiree rehire program
- Completion of new salt storage and vehicle fueling facilities to increase operational efficiency and support resource deployment during severe weather events
- Installation of local weather stations to collect real-time data to better support winter operations decision making
- Deployment of an enhanced GPS product in all large plow trucks to provide greater situational awareness of deployed resources and advanced operational reporting capabilities
- Deployed a winter dashboard that provides real-time situational awareness for maintenance and emergency operations staff as well as management

### ***Average Customer Wait Time for Thruway Roadside Assistance***

The safety of motorists on the Thruway system is a top priority. Disabled vehicles in need of roadside assistance are a safety hazard and must be removed as quickly as possible. Ensuring that contracted tow operators are dispatched and respond to disabled vehicles quickly improves the safety of the Thruway. In 2017, the average wait time remained at 30 minutes or less on the entire Thruway system.

### ***Motor Vehicle Fatalities on the Thruway System***

In 2017, there were 21 fatalities on the Thruway. Motor vehicle fatalities are one of the primary measures of road safety. New York State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan outlines elements that include engineering, education, and enforcement actions, with a focus for the Thruway Authority on system safety engineering. To improve and increase awareness of highway safety, the Thruway Authority was part of a campaign, along with State Police and tow truck operators, raising awareness of New York's Move Over Law. The *Move Over Law* was expanded in July 2016 to include volunteer firefighter and ambulance workers, in addition to law enforcement, emergency or hazard vehicles. The law now applies to vehicles with flashing blue, green, red, white, or amber lights. As part of this campaign, variable message signs displayed reminders across the state and informational posters were hung, flyers were distributed and conversations with travelers were had at Thruway service areas. Additionally, the Thruway Authority, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the Trucking Association of New York today announced "Safety Breaks" as part of the Trucking Association's Share the Road program to educate the general motoring public about the blind spots around large commercial trucks.

## **New NY Bridge Project**

### ***Construction Update***

The twin-span Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge remains on target to fully open to traffic in 2018 within its budget of \$3.98 billion.

As one of the largest bridge projects in the nation and the biggest in the history of the Thruway Authority, the project achieved significant milestones in 2017.

On August 24, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo celebrated the opening of the first span of the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge with a ribbon-cutting ceremony that featured more than 800 dignitaries and residents from Rockland and Westchester counties. The new bridge partially opened to traffic two days later and all traffic was transferred from the Tappan Zee Bridge to the first span on October 6. The Tappan Zee Bridge was retired after nearly 62 years of service.

Work to dismantle the old bridge began at the Rockland and Westchester landings in October. The project's *Lift NY* super crane raised and removed large steel sections, including a removal operation above Metro-North Railroad's Hudson Line in Tarrytown. This critical work will allow design-builder Tappan Zee Constructors (TZC) to connect the second span of the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge to land at both shores.

Other notable construction achievements included installation of the last of the 192 stay cables and setting the last sections of steel and concrete on the eastbound crossing's main span to connect the Rockland and Westchester approaches.

TZC has used more than 800 subcontractors and suppliers based in New York, providing a significant economic boost in the lower Hudson Valley and throughout the state, as envisioned by Governor Cuomo. Approximately 7,000 people have worked on the project to date, accounting for more than nine millions hours.

To date, the project team has held more than 1,000 meetings with the public, including 164 in 2017. The educational outreach team has reached more than nearly 60,000 students in the tri-state area.

The Project's Community Benefits Program awarded \$5.4 million in grants in 2017, for a total of over \$18 million to date.

### ***Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge by the numbers (as of Dec.31, 2017)***

- 100 percent of overall design complete
- 100 percent of concrete piers are completed
- 100 percent of steel girders have been fabricated
- 100 percent of the deck panels have been produced
- 89 percent of all steel spans erected
- 100 percent of the main towers poured
- 100 percent of main span field sections placed
- 100 percent of the main span stay cables installed and tensioned

### ***Protecting the Environment***

In construction as well as design, the New NY Bridge team continues to work diligently to minimize the environmental impacts associated with the project. From the start, the project has transparently protected the Hudson River by monitoring water quality and minimized noise vibration and air quality impacts to residents of local communities through a combination of state-of-the-art technology, and leading-edge construction techniques.

Environmental accomplishments for the project during 2017 include:

- The Authority substantially completed the mitigation project to restore a secondary channel at Gay's Point in Columbia County project through active collaboration with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.
- The Authority finalized the design of a Green Infrastructure Project at Tappan Zee High School in Orangetown, NY to be constructed in 2018 as part of the Compensatory Mitigation Plan.
- Partnering with the Hudson River Foundation, the NY Harbor School, Cornell University, Scenic Hudson, Riverkeeper, NY/NJ Baykeeper, National Marine Fisheries Service and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to completed finalize the design of the Oyster Bed restoration mitigation project to be awarded and constructed in 2018.

Information on the New NY Bridge project can be found at [www.newnybridge.com](http://www.newnybridge.com) and on its Twitter account, @NewNYBridge. The project can also be found on Instagram at [www.instagram.com/newnybridge](http://www.instagram.com/newnybridge).

### **Capital Projects and Construction Contracts**

To balance the needs of its extensive interstate highway and bridge network, the Thruway Authority developed an innovative and comprehensive asset management program in 2012. This program enables the Authority to use extensive data about pavement and bridge conditions, accident profiles, frequent flooding zones, historical investments, and other important elements of the system to prioritize capital projects and determine the most cost-effective and efficient ways to complete those projects.

In 2017, the Thruway Authority opened bids for 32 projects worth a total of more than \$303 million. These projects included:

<b>LOCATION (MP - Milepost)</b>	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>CONSTRUCTION COST</b>
West Seneca (Exit 54, MP 427.7) to Lackawanna Toll Barrier (MP 430.4)	Pavement Replacement/Resurfacing, Rehabilitation of Three Bridges and Replacement of One Bridge	\$66.4 million
Geneva (Exit 42, MP 327.5) to Canandaigua (Exit 44, MP 347.1) Pavement Resurfacing	Pavement Resurfacing	\$26.2 million
Western New York Welcome Center	Construct Welcome Center	\$20.2 million

<b>LOCATION</b> (MP - Milepost)	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>CONSTRUCTION COST</b>
North of Garden State Parkway Connector (MP 24.1) to south of I-287/Route 17S (Exit 15, MP 29.4) and Garden State Parkway Connector (MP GS0.00 to MP GS2.40)	Safety Upgrades	\$19.1 million
West of Utica (MP 233.5) to Verona (Exit 33, MP 252.2)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$18.3 million
Canandaigua (Exit 44, MP 347.1) to Rochester (Exit 45, MP 351.4)	Concrete Pavement Restoration	\$17.6 million
Manchester Interchange (Exit 43) and Chapin-Palmyra Bridges and Sulphur Brook Culverts at MP 335.20	Replacement of Two Bridges, Pavement Resurfacing between the Bridges and Replacement of Two Major Culverts	\$17.0 million
Harriman Toll Barrier (Exit 16, MP 45.2)	Construct New Facilities for All Electronic Toll Collection	\$13.9 million
South of Kingston (MP 86.8) to south of Saugerties (MP 93.8)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$12.0 million
MP 60.95: Newburgh Interchange (Exit 17) Bridge	Bridge Replacement	\$11.1 million
I-90, east of Depew to Williamsville Toll Barrier and I-190, I-90 to South Ogden Street (Exit N1)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$10.0 million
East Syracuse (MP 279.3) to Syracuse - Electronics Parkway (MP 284.1)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$9.9 million
Victor (Exit 45, MP 351.0) to I-390 (Exit 46, MP 362.5) and LeRoy/I-490 (MP 378.27, Exit 47) to west of Pembroke (MP 404.7)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$9.8 million
I-95 (New England Thruway) Bruckner Expressway (MP NE0.17) to Port Chester (MP NE14.10)	Pavement Repairs at Various Locations	\$9.8 million
MP 191.32: Thruway Bridge over Flat Creek	Bridge Replacement	\$7.7 million
MP 63.16: Union Avenue Bridge over Thruway and MP 67.86: Route 32 Bridge over Thruway	Bridge Replacement (Route 32) and Bridge Rehabilitation (Union Avenue)	\$4.8 million
16 Syracuse Division Bridges	Bridge Rehabilitations	\$4.5 million
Dunkirk (MP 467.0, Exit 59) to east of Westfield (MP 483.0)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$4.0 million
East of Rome (MP 240.9) to Verona (Exit 33, MP 252.2)	Safety Upgrades	\$3.2 million

## **Enhanced Services and Attractions for Thruway Motorists**

### ***Port Byron Old Erie Canal Heritage Park***

October 31, 2017 marked the end of a successful first full season of operation. More than 17,000 visitors, representing all 50 states, and from countries as far away as Australia, New Zealand, China, India, and Israel, as well as several countries in Africa, explored the park. The Port Bryon Old Erie Canal Heritage Park, located in Cayuga County, part of Governor Cuomo's *Path Through History* initiative, provides access to the enlarged Erie Canal Lock 52, which was constructed in the 1850s. Additionally, the site includes a restored 1895 Erie House complex, which consists of the Erie House Tavern and Hotel, a mule barn and black-smith shop. The park, operated by the Canal Society of New York, also includes a visitor's center with historical information and walking trails. Travelers can access the heritage park from the Thruway heading eastbound or from State Route 31.

### ***Mohawk Valley Welcome Center***

In June, the Thruway Authority opened the Mohawk Valley Welcome Center (formerly the Lock E-13 Living History Rest Area). The Welcome Center offers travelers a state-of-the-art, year-round facility showcasing the region's rich history and directing visitors to the Mohawk Valley's top tourism destinations. The Welcome Center includes new interactive kiosks promoting the state's tourism industry, Taste NY local food and beverages offerings, grounds featuring a "Path Through History" showcasing the heritage of New York State's historical past, a Walk of Fame highlighting influential individuals from the Mohawk Valley, an ADA compliant playground, and three electric vehicle charging stations. Visitors can access the Welcome Center along the New York State Thruway (I-90) westbound at milepost 187 between exit 28 (Fultonville) and exit 29 (Canajoharie).

### ***Mobile Phone App***

In November, a free mobile device app was launched. The app provides motorists direct access to real-time traffic and navigation assistance while on the go, detailed Thruway services information for New York's 570-mile superhighway. Features include construction and traffic alerts, a safety setting option utilizing voice announcements for roadway updates, a toll calculator for trip planning, the ability to request roadside assistance, E-ZPass and Tolls By Mail information. The app also provides links to the I Love NY tourism app, New York State Department of Transportation, New York Department of Motor Vehicles, New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services - See Something, Say Something, as well as the Thruway Authority website. The app can be downloaded by visiting the iOS devices [website](#) or Android devices [website](#).

## **Environmental Stewardship**

### ***New York State Pollinator Task Force***

In 2017, the Thruway Authority continued its efforts to support pollinator habitat and the recommendations from the New York State Pollinator Protection Plan. In particular, the Authority continued best management practices, including, but not limited to planting flowering shrubs in living snow fences, reducing mowing limits to support native species, and increased wildflower plantings.

### ***Living Snow Fence***

Snow fences play an important role in snow control measures along the Thruway by

limiting snow blown from adjacent lands from reaching the highway. NYSTA is improving upon their already successful “living snow fence” program, now using flowering shrubs for snow drift prevention along roadways prone to heavy snow. If successful, these types of blooming shrubs can be incorporated into future installations of new living snow fences along state right-of-ways, providing additional forage for native and migratory pollinators, in support of the Pollinator Protection Plan.

### ***Solar Highway***

The New York State Thruway Authority is partnering with the New York State Department of Transportation on a proposal to install solar infrastructure within and along the highway rights-of-way. The final Agreements were executed with the selected vendors, Monolith Solar Associates, LLC and CIR Electrical Construction Corporation (Solar by CIR) and have been approved by the New York State Attorney General and the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Up to six sites will be developed along the Thruway. The vendors will be responsible for securing the necessary agreements with the local utility companies, which is required for construction and operation of the sites. Once operational, the sites will be capable of generating up to 3.3 million kilowatt hours of AC per year.

### **Troop T**

New York State Police Troop T is the State Police unit dedicated to patrolling the Thruway system. In addition to regular enforcement activities, Troop T is an integral part of Thruway safety-related initiatives throughout the year.

- Speed Week campaigns are enforcement initiatives that focus on speeding motorists and aggressive driving. Troopers conducted enforcement for distracted drivers (e.g., texting or cell phone use), impaired drivers, drivers violating the *Move Over Law* and vehicle occupants who are not properly using seat belts.
- The annual *Work Zone Safety Awareness* campaign, which took place during April, targeted speeding motorists and aggressive driving in and around construction work zones.
- State Police continue to be vigilant enforcing DWI laws. Their enforcement campaigns include dedicated patrols and checkpoints, which are conducted randomly at undisclosed location points along the statewide Thruway system.
- The 41st Annual *Pumpkin Patrol*, aimed at preventing Halloween pranks and protecting motorists along the Thruway, involving volunteers from local organizations from numerous counties throughout the state. Troopers and volunteers, posted on highway bridges and overpasses, successfully prevented incidents of property damage or mischief.