



Annual Highlights – 2024

Overview

New York State Thruway Authority (Authority)

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 seven decades, celebrating its 70th year of service on June 24, 2024.

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

- 2024 Overall Revised Budget: **\$1.28 billion**
- Thruway Operating Expenses: **\$416.4 million**
- Debt Service: **\$352.3 million**
- Thruway System-wide Capital Projects 2024 Revised Cash Flow Budget: **\$443.7 million**
- Five-year Capital Plan (2024-2028) investment: **\$2.1 billion**
- State Police Troop T investment: **\$70.8 million**
- **1,364,317+ visitors** to the Thruway's three welcome centers
- **21.4+ million visitors** to the Thruway's Service Areas
- **441 lane miles** of highway pavement rehabilitated or reconstructed
- **5 bridges** replaced
- **13 bridges** rehabilitated
- **58.2+ million gallons** of gasoline and diesel fuel sold at Thruway service areas
- **49,566** roadside service calls received by the Thruway Statewide Operations Center
- **190,666 employee hours** worked, and **1,659,122 miles** traveled conducting snow and ice operations
- **57,572** special hauling permits issued to oversize and overweight vehicles
- **468** bridges inspected
- **124,737 tickets** issued by New York State Police Troop T including:
 - **52,246** for speeding
 - **1,821** for cell phone usage
 - **3,943** for texting while driving
 - **8,031** for no seatbelt
 - **3,632** for violating the ***Move Over Law***

- **8,964 crashes** investigated
- **824 criminal arrests and 1,008 DWI arrests**

Workforce Investment

On December 3, 2024, the Thruway Authority Board of Directors unanimously approved a Recruitment and Retention Pay Differential to invest in its current employees who are the backbone of the organization. This action creates a more unified compensation structure for hundreds of Thruway Authority employees and allows the Authority to remain competitive in recruiting and retaining employees.

This builds upon a previous action in 2023 when the Authority Board of Directors authorized the Executive Director to implement a geographic pay differential at the Thruway Authority for select maintenance titles that aligned with the titles and new compensation rates that had been approved by the State of New York in 2022.

The Thruway Authority and its leadership team truly believe that its employees are its most valuable resource, and this investment in the workforce will help drive the Authority's competitiveness as an employer.

Winter Operations and Emergency Management

In 2024, the Authority continued strengthening its snow and ice fleet operations. These efforts included:

- Equipping more than 250 heavy-duty plow trucks with green hazard lights, complementing the standard amber hazard lights. Green lights are intended to improve visibility and safety during winter operations, particularly in low light conditions and poor weather. The lights will only be used for snow and ice removal.
- Added 50 new pieces of snow fighting equipment statewide, including 19 new heavy-duty plow trucks, 25 medium-duty snowplows, loaders, skid steers with snowblowers and snow pushers, light-duty pickup trucks with plows and spreaders, new salt spreader bodies, and two snowmobiles and a UTV for NYS Police Troop T.
- Launched a pilot program in partnership with iCone to improve safety and driving efficiency on the Thruway. This initiative involved equipping 50 heavy-duty plow trucks with advanced devices that provide real-time data to the Waze navigation application.
 - During snow and ice operations, the device connects with navigation systems to alert drivers about potential upcoming hazards, such as snowplow activities. This alerts motorists to be aware and to navigate the area safely, significantly enhancing driving efficiency and ensuring the safety of plow operators. These devices send alerts to Waze users, notifying them of an upcoming "Road Hazard Ahead" when the trucks are engaged in snow and ice operations or other highway maintenance activities.
 - The devices are currently active in Albany and New York regions, as well as select areas in Buffalo and Syracuse where the highest number of plow

crashes have occurred over the past five years. If successful, the Authority will expand installing iCone devices in all Thruway plow trucks.

- Continued to develop and enhance the Authority's Emergency Management Operations Protocol (EMOP) document and train staff on requirements in conjunction with the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES)
- Coordinated statewide storm response with Authority, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), State Police and DHSES staff
- Conducted tabletop exercises and drills with outside agencies and transportation partners for preparedness in emergency situations

Average Customer Wait Time for Thruway Roadside Assistance

The safety of motorists on the Thruway system is the top priority. Disabled vehicles in need of roadside assistance can be a safety hazard and should be removed as quickly as possible. Ensuring that authorized tow operators and service providers are dispatched and respond to disabled vehicles quickly enhances safety on the Thruway. In 2024, the average response time was 30 minutes on the Thruway system.

Motor Vehicle Fatalities on the Thruway System

The Thruway continues to be one of the safest highways in the nation. In comparison to the US Department of Transportation's national fatality rates, the Thruway's fatality rate for 2023* was 0.25 per/100 million vehicle miles (MVM) traveled, far below the estimated national rate of 1.17 fatalities per/100 MVM for the first half of 2024. There were 22 crashes resulting in 23 fatalities reported on the Thruway in 2023.

**Most current information available*

In 2024, the Thruway Authority tragically lost two employees working on the roadway in separate incidents. In May 2024, maintenance employees Vincent Giammarva, a 19-year employee in Buffalo Division was killed, and Mark Vara, seriously injured, after being hit by a vehicle on I-90 near Henrietta. In November 2024, Maintenance Supervisor Stephen Ebling, a 15-year employee in Buffalo Division, was killed after being hit by a vehicle on I-90 in Silver Creek.

Bridge Strike Enforcement

In Fall 2024, the Authority partnered with the New York State Police Troop T Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Unit (CVEU) to set up an over height vehicle checkpoint in all four Divisions. The height limit on the Thruway is 13'6". Enforcement details were held in various regions along the Thruway leading to 31 violations for over height vehicles among the 938 violations issued.

Additionally, by leveraging technology, the Authority launched a pilot program to install and implement an over height vehicle detection system at two locations in Central New York. When an over height vehicle drives past the sensors and triggers the system, a sign will be illuminated warning the driver that their vehicle is over height.

Toll Collection Efforts

The Thruway Authority is reevaluating discount programs and recertifying resident customers to ensure the accuracy of these resident discount programs. This includes the Mario M Cuomo Bridge (GMMCB) Resident Discount Plan and the Grand Island Resident toll rate. The GMMCB Carpool Discount Program was eliminated in 2024, which further streamlines and consolidates the back end of our cashless tolling system and results in approximately \$1 million in additional revenue to the Authority annually. The majority of these customers were proactively moved, based on their eligibility, to other discount plans, such as the GMMCB Commuter Plan or the GMMCB Resident Discount Plan.

In 2024, the Authority increased registration holds with Massachusetts by 118.72%. The Authority increased registration suspensions by over 3,700 from 2023 to 2024 and collected \$5.7 million in debt.

Solar Eclipse April 8

The Thruway Authority was an active member of the state's Eclipse Task Force and prepared and coordinated with other state agencies for several months for the Solar Eclipse on April 8. The Authority provided increased staffing and patrols in Maintenance and Traffic Safety for the weekend leading into the eclipse and continuing through the event on April 8. In anticipation of the increased traffic, fueling locations at all Service Areas were filled and the stores located in the open service areas were fully stocked. Authorized tow garages and additional HELP trucks were available to assist disabled vehicles. Operations centers in all four divisions and headquarters were activated and staffed throughout the event to monitor traffic and operations along the system. Thruway personnel also staffed the State Emergency Operations Center, coordinating and managing the event with partner state agencies. The Authority worked closely with New York State Police Troop T who also had their own preparations and enforcement plan. VMS was utilized the week before the event in and outside the path of totality to inform all motorists of the event and expected increase in traffic. Free eclipse sunglasses were available at the Thruway Welcome Centers and service areas.

Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge

The twin-span Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge—the longest in New York State—fully opened to traffic in 2018; nearly 60 million vehicles cross the bridge each year.

More than 750,000 people have visited the bridge's 3.6-mile bicycle and pedestrian path since it opened in June 2020, including approximately 120,000 in 2024. Close to 8,200 visitors arrived at the path via a free seasonal weekend Hudson Link bus shuttle sponsored by NYSDOT, marking a nearly 25 percent increase from the previous year.

Visitors continue to be notified of the latest path news and real-time information through the bridge's Instagram (@gmmcb_ny) and Twitter (@gmmcb) feeds.

The bridge's architectural features including eight towers, 192 stay cables, and scores of piers, were lit nightly in 2024. The bridge was bathed in color in sync with other state landmarks to observe major federal, state, and religious holidays, and in support of numerous awareness days on more than 100 occasions.

Its website allows the public to make lighting requests to recognize important community causes and notable events. Visitors also can find information about the path's many recreational features, such as its public art installations, along with a design and engineering overview, and content regarding the legacy of the former Tappan Zee Bridge.

The website's "BridgeCam" and "FalconCam" continued to be popular features, allowing visitors to capture views of the main span, and the resident peregrine falcons that live atop one of its towers. In 2024, the Authority partnered with the local water company on a contest to name the bridge's four falcon chicks. Elementary school students in Rockland and Westchester submitted more than 100 names and close to 200,000 votes were cast online by the public to pick the winners. Local teachers also used the webcam and naming contest as opportunities to educate students about peregrine falcons, the history of this endangered species and wildlife stewardship. Additionally, the Route 9 multimodal improvement project, which extends the bridge side path in Tarrytown one mile south to Lyndhurst, significantly progressed. In June 2024, a 270-foot-long pedestrian bridge was installed over the Thruway. Other improvements were completed including widening a section of Route 9 and the eastbound I-87/I-287 on-ramp, adding a second southbound left turn lane onto the Thruway ramp, repaving the roadway, and installing a traffic signal at a key Route 9 intersection.

Federal Grant Applications

The Thruway Authority has continued its efforts to find and apply for grant opportunities it is eligible for to supplement the Authority's revenue portfolio when funding is awarded.

In 2024, the Authority was awarded four federal grants:

1. Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation Program (PROTECT) to rehabilitate and install seismic retrofits on the South Grand Island Bridges - \$39 million
2. FEMA Hazard Mitigation Program to study flood mitigation strategies in the Town of Clarkstown along the Thruway - \$375,000
3. Bridge Investment Program (BIP) Planning for the Grand Island Bridges and I-190 Corridor - \$1.597 million
4. Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation program (SMART) for Stage 2 implementation of the Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) technologies - \$14.8 million

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, crash 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 2024, the Thruway Authority awarded 31 construction contracts in all four divisions worth more than \$502 million including the following:

DIVISION	LOCATION (MP - Milepost)	PROJECT	CONSTRUCTION COST
New York	Various Locations	Bridge Maintenance Cleaning	\$533,672
New York	MP 46.0 to MP 60.1	Pavement Resurfacing	\$36,578,827
New York	MP NE4.0 to MP 8.8	Pavement Resurfacing, Bridge Rehabilitation & Retaining Wall Repairs	\$86,660,525.34
New York	MP 24.0 to MP 29.4	Pavement Resurfacing and Bridge Deck Repairs	\$18,366,748
New York	Various Locations	On-Demand Repair Contract	\$4,921,375
New York	MP 29.54	Bridge Preservation	\$19,331,680
New York	Various Locations	Pavement Safety Striping	\$372,436
New York	MP 60.95	Bridge Replacement	\$7,809,781
Albany	MP 165.10, 171.31, 174.71, 179.76 & 185.93	Scour Repairs at Various Bridges	\$2,985,000
Albany	MP 81.72	Bridge Rehabilitation	\$23,711,237
Albany	MP 153.83 to MP 161.3	Mill and Inlay with Bridge Pavement Clearance Improvements	\$19,028,115
Albany	MP 801.08	Bridge Rehabilitation	\$38,231,999
Albany	Various Locations	On-Demand Repair Contract	\$3,269,500
Albany & Syracuse	Various Locations	Pavement Safety Striping	\$1,609,330
Syracuse	MP 227.40 & 227.41	Mainline Bridge Rehabs	\$4,770,477
Syracuse	Various Locations	Pavement Repairs	\$6,038,000
Syracuse	MP 304.20	Section Maintenance Building and Roof Replacement	\$1,907,200
Syracuse	MP 197.8 to MP 210.3	Pavement Resurfacing	\$13,749,683

DIVISION	LOCATION (MP - Milepost)	PROJECT	CONSTRUCTION COST
Syracuse	MP 313.82 & MP 320.41	Bridge Rehabilitations	\$2,540,038
Syracuse	MP 238.22	Bridge Replacement	\$9,315,274
Syracuse	MP 347.1 to MP 351.4	Pavement Rehabilitation	\$61,500,000
Syracuse	MP 280.31	Bridge Replacement	\$7,555,038
Syracuse	MP 252.71	Construct Municipal Sewer / Water Connections	\$1,180,670
Syracuse	MP 219.70 to MP 219.91	Bridge Replacement	\$20,528,410
Syracuse & Buffalo	Various Locations	Pavement Safety Striping	\$1,999,980
Buffalo	South and North Grand Island Bridges	Bridge Maintenance Cleaning	\$737,400
Buffalo	Various Locations	Pavement Repairs	\$8,227,000
Buffalo	MP 467.0 to 483.0	Pavement Rehabilitation	\$44,994,455
Buffalo	MP 351.40 to MP 378.20	Pavement Resurfacing	\$36,853,000
Buffalo	MP 430.6 to MP 438.5	Pavement Resurfacing	\$10,974,148
Buffalo	Various Locations	On-Demand Repair Contract	\$5,330,980

Enhanced Services and Attractions for Thruway Motorists

Service Area Project

In 2024, Empire State Thruway Partners continued construction at numerous service area locations across the Thruway system. As part of the \$450 million project to redevelop and modernize all 27 service areas, 12 service areas reopened, signifying the highest amount of completed locations in a year. The project is funded through a public-private partnership and no toll dollars or state tax dollars are being used for the construction.

The lease agreement with Empire State Thruway Partners is a 33-year term and is nearing the end of the construction phase. By the end of 2025, all 27 Service Areas across the Thruway system will have been rebuilt or remodeled. Fuel services remain available at all locations while the service areas are under construction.

Environmental Sustainability at the Service Areas

The Service Area modernization project, which began in 2021, incorporates numerous strategies to promote sustainability, reduce energy consumption and achieve the

objectives of New York State Executive Order 22. Items include high efficiency heating and air conditioning systems, fixtures to improve indoor air quality, non-invasive, low maintenance plantings, solar panels and much more. United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles will be incorporated into the buildings and surrounding sites.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

At the end of 2024, there were 76 high speed charging stations located at 16 service areas and three welcome centers, and 22 level 2 charging stations located at nine commuter park and ride lots and the two Gov. Mario M. Cuomo Bridge landings.

As part of the service area improvements, all 27 service areas will have at least four and up to eight, Level 3 fast charging stations able to charge all types of electric passenger vehicles. Where feasible, the sites will be upgraded to support future growth and more electric vehicle (EV) stations as demand increases.

The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act established the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program. NEVI provides funding to states to deploy electric vehicle (EV) fast chargers along designated electric vehicle corridors to establish an interconnected EV charging network across the state and nation.

The Authority is part of an interagency workgroup, led by NYSDOT, to develop and implement New York's NEVI Plan.

Work Zone Safety

The Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement Program (New York State Chapter 421 of the Laws of 2021) went live in April 2023. The law was passed in September 2021 authorizing the Authority and NYSDOT to develop a five-year pilot program to use automated photo enforcement technologies to impose monetary liability on vehicle owners for speed violations in work zones. The program goal is to improve safety by reducing speeding in active work zones. There are 10 mobile units that are used in active work zones across the Thruway.

In 2024, nearly 87,000 Notices of Liability were issued for work zone speed violations along the Thruway. During this period, the Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement Program collected \$3,755,543.86, with a Notice of Liability collection rate of 81 percent.

Of the more than 3.3 million vehicles that passed an automated work zone vehicle during this time, approximately three percent were issued a Notices of Liability. The average speed in work zones with a posted 45 mph speed limit was 46 mph. The average speed in work zones with a posted speed limit of 55 mph was 50 mph, and 63 mph in work zones with a posted speed limit of 65 mph. Despite the speed reductions, more than 3,605 or 4.5 percent of those issued a Notices of Liability were repeat offenders.

To better coordinate and address employee safety, Director Hoare established the Work Zone Safety Task Force (WZTF) in 2024, a Thruway-wide effort that includes staff from various program areas collaborating to save lives and improve work zone safety by reviewing and revising current policies and procedures, developing, and implementing mechanisms for work zone intrusion tracking, increasing driver awareness, minimizing traffic exposure to employees and injury and close call prevention.

The WZTF developed a proposal that designates surplus revenue (exceeding expenses) generated by the Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement Program (AWZSE) for new safety initiatives. \$300,000 is a direct result of surplus revenue from the AWZSE and will be used in the Authority's 2025 budget to improve worker safety, including work zone equipment and traffic control safety supplies.

As an added safety measure, Governor Hochul announced a proposal in her 2025 State of the State address to make the pilot Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement program permanent. She also proposed expanding the program to include MTA Bridges and Tunnels and NYS Bridge Authority locations.

Land Mobile Radio Upgrade Project

In 2024, the Authority executed a final contract with the highest rated proposer for the design, implementation, and maintenance of a public safety grade land mobile radio system. The Authority is currently using a radio system which consists of components that date back more than 20 years. As part of the project, system infrastructure will be upgraded along with all subscriber equipment. The new radio system will provide enhanced coverage statewide along the Thruway corridor, increasing safety and reliability for all users including Thruway staff, New York State Police Troop T, and responders. Implementation of the new radio system is expected to be completed in 2028.

New York State Pollinator Task Force

The Authority's work to support pollinators continued in 2024. The New York State Pollinator Protection Plan focuses on development of Best Management Practices for all pollinator stakeholders; habitat enhancement efforts to protect and revive populations of all pollinators; research and monitoring efforts to better understand, prevent and recover from pollinator losses; and development of an outreach and education plan to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators and engage the public as active participants in reversing pollinator decline.

The Authority continued to utilize a reduced mowing program to preserve and expand habitat for pollinators and to support the growth of native plants as well as promoting sustainable vegetation to prevent erosion and increase stormwater infiltration, slowing runoff and improving water quality. Through strategic adjustments, a reduction of up to 14 percent in labor hours for mowing was achieved in 2024, demonstrating a significant decrease.

The Authority also carries on efforts to promote pollinator habitat through plantings of wildflowers in select areas, using specific seed blends that attract pollinators. In addition to maintaining existing wildflower areas across the system, nearly two acres of new wildflower areas were planted near exits 35 and 38, and a wildflower meadow was established on the site of a former wastewater treatment plant at the Ramapo Service Area.

The Authority continued to participate in a research study, led by the New York State Department of Transportation and undertaken by the Rochester Institute of Technology to identify impacts of a modified highway mowing regime on pollinators. The study results, issued in 2024, found higher habitat quality, higher proportions of flowering plants, and modest benefits to the pollinating insects that were monitored in areas where the modified mowing practices were adopted. Additional investigation would be required to determine how to best balance pollinator benefits with vegetation management.

Solar Highway

The Authority's solar array at Woodbury continues to provide renewable energy which is used to offset the energy utilities at several Authority facilities. We currently have 15 utility accounts in the New York Division using the solar array to offset the utility bills. Since January 1, 2020, we have produced 4.21 Gigawatt hours (GWh).

Troop T

New York State Police Troop T is the State Police unit dedicated to patrolling the Thruway system. The Thruway Authority spent \$70.8 million in 2024 to support Troop T operations. 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 *Operation Work Brake* campaign, which took place during April, targeted speeding motorists and aggressive driving in and around construction work zones. Troop T issued 2,218 tickets for speeding, violating the *Move Over Law*, safety belt infractions and distracted driving, and made 6 DWI arrests during the 2024 campaign.
- State Police continue to vigilantly enforce DWI laws. Their enforcement campaigns include dedicated patrols and checkpoints, which are conducted randomly at undisclosed locations along the statewide Thruway system.
- The 48th Annual *Pumpkin Patrol*, aimed at preventing Halloween pranks and protecting motorists along the Thruway involves 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.

