



Thruway Authority

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

JOANNE M. MAHONEY
Chair

MATTHEW J. DRISCOLL
Executive Director

To: Governor Kathy Hochul
Karen Persichilli Keogh, Secretary to the Governor
Elizabeth Fine, Counsel to the Governor

From: Matthew J. Driscoll, Executive Director of the Thruway Authority
Re: Government Transparency Initiative
Date: October 20, 2021

Transparency and accountability in state government is at the cornerstone for productive and credible delivery of services to New York’s residents and we strongly support and embrace fully transparent policies and practices. The Thruway Authority is an independent public authority that relies entirely on toll revenues rather than state and local taxpayer dollars.

To that end, as a public authority, the Thruway Authority complies with various accountability requirements including the posting of numerous guidelines, policies, statutes, etc. on the Authority’s website. A categorized list of those documents is attached in Appendix A. The Authority also contributes to Open Data NY – see Appendix B. Currently, there are 54 distinct data sets available online and we are always looking to provide additional information on a regular basis.

In response to your request, the Thruway Authority plans to move forward with the following items to improve the transparency of the operations of the organization.

Publish Board Meeting Supporting Documents

As an independent public authority, we are governed by a Board of Directors whose meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Law. Each Board Meeting is open to the public (pending COVID restrictions) and must be duly noticed to the public and streamed live for viewing. Board meeting schedules are published for the entire year beginning in January. Meeting agendas are published on our website in advance of the meetings but currently, the supporting board exhibits and other documents associated with the agenda items are not published. Moving ahead, in line with other transportation authorities such as the MTA, we will publish our board book supporting materials online with the agenda.

Capital and Infrastructure Investment

The Thruway Authority posts a variety of information about the overall quality of the highway and the more than 800 bridges under our jurisdiction. We continuously maintain separate



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Pavement and Bridge Asset Management systems to collect data for analysis and integration into our decision-making processes as we develop and refine our five-year capital plan. This information will be updated annually.

<https://www.thruway.ny.gov/oursystem/capitalprogram/current-infra-info.html>

More Transparent Bidding Process and Contract Awards

The Authority is in the final stages of implementing Bid Express software. Once implemented, the Authority will manage and accept bids electronically, and have the ability to publish the bid tabulations. We will incorporate line item results into our database so bidders can query specific bidding items and obtain historical information to develop a more competitive bid. Along with reducing bidder and staff time to respond and process Authority bids, this is a more open and transparent process, and it is more advantageous from a pricing perspective for the Authority.

Maintenance Operations and Fleet Management

We plan to add the following information to our public website:

- Alternative Fuel/EV: The Authority will begin reporting on its website the amount of E-85 or gallons of gasoline replaced with E-85 and the use of Bio diesel. We are investing and building out our EV fleet to meet the Governor's goals of a zero-emission grid and reducing greenhouse gas emissions 40 percent by 2030.
- Truck Miles traveled and Acres of Thruway Right of Way Mowed/Planted to reduce mowing and promote pollinators

Financial Reports

The Authority already publishes a wide variety of financial reports on the public website. See Appendices A and B. As part of this effort to increase transparency, the Authority includes the following on its website:

- Bond Program - [Bond Program - New York State Thruway \(ny.gov\)](#)
- Monthly Financials - [Monthly Financials - New York State Thruway \(ny.gov\)](#)

Renewable Energy

The Authority has a photovoltaic energy system (solar system) on its Right of Way at Woodbury (Orange County). The solar system is operated and maintained by a solar provider who was



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selected as part of a competitive procurement process. The solar system has an annual production goal of one million Kilowatt hours with an estimated lifetime production of 25 years.

The energy generated by the solar system is fed directly into the electric utility grid and used to offset the Authority's electric bills at several nearby facilities. The Authority is currently evaluating other locations along the system for similar installations which would also advance through a competitive procurement process. Moving forward, the Authority will provide information on the Authority's website related to the Woodbury solar system and plans for future installations, when available.

Aesthetic Lighting for the Gov. Mario M. Cuomo Bridge

The Authority will move ahead to publish the aesthetic lighting calendar for the bridge. In addition, we will have an online platform for the public to submit requests to light the bridge in different color schemes for a variety of "good causes." The determination will follow our approved policy governing the lighting.

Training

The Authority provides a wide variety of training to its employees. We host Instructor-led (webinar and in-person) training classes on 30 supervisory, employee development, and Microsoft application topics; Self-paced training classes are available on demand as a supplement to instructor-led programs; Customized work unit workshops and training consultation and facilitation services are offered as requested; Resume review and mock employment interview sessions provided in addition to technical and safety training programs, a comprehensive Thruway Maintenance Worker training program and we facilitate the completion of the Governor's Office of Employee Relation's annual mandatory training requirements. We plan to publish these numbers on our public website moving ahead.

Legal and Compliance

- The Authority will process FOIL requests within the timeframe as required by law and will post the list of FOILs received and date of receipt on its website. We have effectively eliminated the costs of providing documents to public because we provide electronic links to documents. Although Public Officers Law allows a 25 cent per page charge, it is rare that we charge.
- The Authority will post a list of all contracts for engineering services, financial services and goods and services entered into by the Authority; a list of all lawsuits brought on behalf of the Authority and against the Authority and a list of real estate acquisitions and sales.