

**New York State Thruway Authority**  
**Annual Highlights - 2016**

**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 2016, 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.

***New York State Canal Corporation***

The 2016 New York State enacted budget included the transfer of the Canal Corporation from the jurisdiction of the Thruway Authority to the New York Power Authority (NYPA) – Chapter 54 of the Laws of 2016. During the past year, teams of NYPA, Thruway and Canals employees completed the integration, separating out many complex functions from the Thruway Authority.

**Thruway by the Numbers**

- **49,657** special hauling permits issued to oversize and overweight vehicles
- More than **34 million visitors** to the Thruway's 27 service areas
- **277,263 square feet** of highway pavement repaired
- More than **73.9 million gallons** of gasoline and diesel fuel sold at Thruway service areas
- **39,859** roadside service calls received by the Thruway Statewide Operations Center
- **56,049 square feet** of material used to fabricate **36,891** new signs
- **145,831 tons** of salt and **308,726 gallons** of anti-icing agents applied during winter maintenance season
- **222,309 staff hours** spent and **2,239,761 miles** traveled conducting snow and ice operations
- **29,515 staff hours** spent performing landscape maintenance, including tree and brush removal, growth control and rock/earth slope repair
- More than **147,000 tickets** issued by New York State Police Troop T, including but not limited to:
  - **76,191** for speeding
  - **2,925** for cell phone usage
  - **1,851** for texting while driving
  - **6,145** for no seatbelt
  - **2,852** for violating the ***Move Over Law***
- **10,389** accidents investigated
- **3,403** criminal and **1,141** DWI **arrests** made by Troop T

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

The safety of motorists on the Thruway system is a paramount concern. 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 2016, the average wait time was 30 minutes. The Thruway Authority will continue to work on minimizing the average time between when a tow operator is informed of a call for assistance and the arrival of that assistance in 2017.

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

In 2016, there were 15 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 highway safety, 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. On November 1, 2016, the *Move Over Law* was further expanded to include sanitation vehicles such as garbage and recycling trucks. During November 2016, the Thruway Authority in cooperation with the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, State Police, DMV and DOT, conducted a coordinated outreach campaign to remind motorists about the importance of the *Move Over Law*. This campaign included:

- a. Airing a PSA about the *Move Over Law*
- b. Handing out information cards to motorists at Thruway Toll Plazas
- c. Meet & greets with emergency responders at numerous service areas on the Thruway with representatives from State Police, Thruway Authority, and tow truck companies
- d. Social media outreach

## **New NY Bridge Project**

### ***Construction Update***

The New NY Bridge project 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 North America, the New NY Bridge project achieved significant construction milestones in 2016. Progress included completion of the twin-crossing's eight iconic towers, installation of the 192 stay cables that will help support the main span, and placement of all of the structural steel for the westbound approaches.

In April, the Thruway Authority launched all-electronic toll collection, or cashless tolling, at the Tappan Zee Bridge, allowing motorists to pay tolls without slowing down or stopping. The entire Tarrytown toll plaza was demolished and the tolling point is currently located in South Nyack.

A signature achievement was the topping off of the eight 419-foot tall main span towers in December – approximately 16 months after tower construction began.

Tappan Zee Constructors has used more than 729 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. More than 6,300 people have worked on the project to date.

To date, the project team has held more than 900 meetings with the public, including 204 in 2016. The educational outreach team has reached more than 45,000 students in the tri-state area.

***New NY Bridge by the numbers (as of Dec. 20, 2016)***

- 100 percent of overall design complete;
- 90 percent of concrete piers are completed;
- 89 percent of steel girders have been fabricated;
- 88 percent of the deck panels have been produced;
- 94 percent of girder assemblies placed;
- 46 percent of main span field sections placed; and,
- 35 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 minimizing 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 2016 include:

- Collaboration with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to finalize the design of a Green Infrastructure Project and Gay's Point Secondary Channel Restoration project as part of the Compensatory Mitigation Plan. The Authority expects to receive bids on these projects in 2017.
- 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 monitor test materials to determine the "what and where" of the oyster restoration program, to be constructed as the project nears completion; and,
- Awarded more than \$10 million in grants from the project's Community Benefits Program.

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 2016, the Thruway Authority opened bids for 41 projects worth a total of more than \$194 million. These projects included:

<b>LOCATION (MP - Milepost)</b>	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>CONSTRUCTION COST</b>
I-390 (Exit 46, MP 362.3) to LeRoy (Exit 47, MP 378.2)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$21.5 million
Northway (Exit 24, MP 148.2) to west of Schenectady (Exit 25, MP 154.4)	Pavement Rehabilitation	\$17.7 million
Thruway Bridge over Vine Street (MP 284.90) and Thruway Bridge over CSX Railroad (Salina) (MP 284.74)	Bridge Replacements	\$15.2 million
Thruway Bridge over Pascack Road (MP 23.62), Scotland Hill Road Bridge over Thruway (MP 23.09) and Thruway Bridge over Saddle River Road (MP 25.10)	Bridge Rehabilitations	\$11.1 million
Canastota (Exit 34, MP 262.0) to west of Syracuse (MP 279.3)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$9.4 million
Herkimer (Exit 30, MP 220.0) to west of Utica (MP 233.5)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$9.0 million
MP 920.35: North Grand Island Bridge Northbound	Bridge Rehabilitation	\$8.4 million
Westfield (Exit 60, MP 485.0) to Pennsylvania State Line (MP 496.0) Westbound	Pavement Resurfacing	\$7.5 million
Berkshire Thruway, Canaan Toll Barrier (MP BS17.9) to Massachusetts State Line (MP BS24.3)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$7.4 million
East of Rotterdam (MP 161.0) to east of Amsterdam (MP 170.0), Pattersonville Service Area and Interchange 25A	Pavement Resurfacing	\$7.2 million
Repair/Replace Joints and Substructure and Fascia Repairs on Various Buffalo Division Bridges	Bridge Rehabilitations	\$7.0 million
Replacement of Joints on Various New York Division Bridges and Rehabilitation of the Midland Ave and Route 304 Bridges over Thruway	Bridge Rehabilitations	\$6.6 million

LOCATION (MP - Milepost)	PROJECT	CONSTRUCTION COST
Buffalo Airport Route 33 EB (Exit 51, MP 420.9 to 421.5)	Lengthen Eastbound Merge Lane	\$6.7 million
I-190, Tonawanda Toll Barrier (MP N14.90) to Niagara Toll Barrier (MP N20.22)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$6.4 million
East of Williamsville Toll Barrier (MP 419.4) to west of Buffalo-Williams Street (Exit 52A, MP 425.9) and Lackawanna Toll Barrier (MP 430.4) to west of Hamburg (MP 438.6)	Pavement Resurfacing	\$4.9 million
North of Catskill (MP 115.6 to MP 116.0 SB and MP 115.3 to MP 116.0 NB)	Rock Removal	\$4.0 million
Thruway Bridges over Pittsford Mendon Center Road (MP 356.69 EB and MP 356.70 WB)	Bridge Rehabilitations	\$3.7 million

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

#### ***Taste NY***

In 2016, Taste NY sales topped \$13.1 million, the highest sales in the program's history and nearly triple its 2015 sales of \$4.5 million. The program was launched by Governor Cuomo in 2013 to promote New York's food and beverage industries. The Thruway Authority has partnered with various state agencies, including the Department of Agriculture and Markets and Empire State Development, to promote Taste NY stores and products at our service areas. Currently, 18 service areas on the Thruway offer seasonal Taste NY Farm Markets, and every one of the Thruway's 27 service areas offer Taste NY products. These stores serve as an opportunity to promote locally produced goods.

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

In September 2016, the Port Bryon Erie Canal Heritage Park located in Cayuga County, part of Governor Cuomo's *Path Through History* initiative, opened. The park 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 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.

### ***Lock E-13 Living History Rest Area***

The Lock E-13 Living History Rest Area, located in Montgomery County, opened in May 2016. It represents a physical connection of the two transportation corridors that helped build the Empire State – the Erie Canal and the New York State Thruway. The facility includes a Taste NY Market, small visitor’s center, recreational areas and a dedicated truck parking lot. Travelers can access the rest area from the Thruway heading westbound.

## **Environmental Stewardship**

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

In 2016, the Governor’s New York State Pollinator Task Force published the New York State Pollinator Protection Plan. The Thruway Authority worked collaboratively with other state agencies to provide input to the plan. In support of the recommendations from the plan, NYSTA will continue its practices to avoid insecticide and herbicide application to the maximum extent possible and use other best management practices to reduce mowing limits and support native species. In addition, NYSTA’s Syracuse Division piloted a Pollinator Protection Program, which will restore parts of the right-of-way to a natural regeneration area.

### ***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.

## **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 *Operation Work Brake* community safety program, 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 Thruway Authority, in conjunction with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Troop T, held its 30th Annual *Red Ribbon Campaign* to raise public

awareness of its anti-DWI initiative. As part of MADD's holiday program, Thruway toll collectors distributed approximately 50,000 ribbons at key locations throughout the Thruway system. The ribbons are a symbol selected by MADD to raise public awareness about the dangers of intoxicated and drugged driving and visibly remind and encourage others to take the pledge to not drive while impaired.

- The 40th Annual *Pumpkin Patrol*, aimed at preventing Halloween pranks and protecting motorists along the Thruway, involved more than 250 volunteers from 16 local organizations from 20 counties. Troopers and volunteers, posted on highway bridges and overpasses, successfully prevented incidents of property damage or mischief.