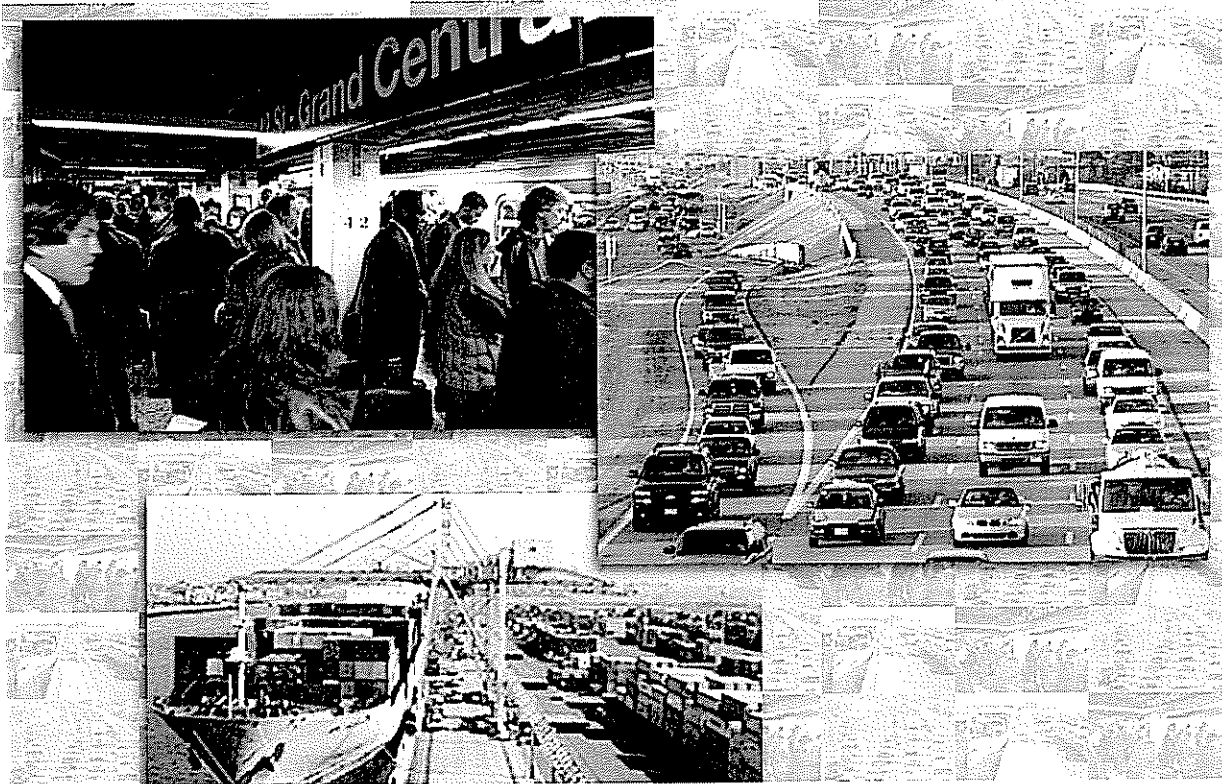


Transportation-Trouble Ahead

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Report from the New York State Advisory Panel on Transportation Policy for 2025

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*Findings and Recommendations
of
The New York State Advisory Panel on Transportation Policy for 2025*

Executive Summary

Over the past year the New York State Advisory Panel on Transportation Policy for 2025, a group of transportation professionals representing many perspectives, conducted an extensive series of hearings throughout the State. After careful deliberation of the results of those hearings the Panel has concluded that **trouble lies ahead** for transportation without **bold leadership** and **substantial new investments of tens of billions of dollars** in just the next five years alone. The trouble that is on the horizon will have immediate ramifications on the citizens and businesses throughout the State. If bold leadership is not shown and adequate, meaningful funding is not provided, the infrastructure will deteriorate, the economy will falter, jobs will be lost, and the quality of life in New York State will suffer dramatically.

The problems are complex. Multiple modes of transportation must work together seamlessly - today they do not. The current demands on the transportation system must be recognized and new demands anticipated. Multi year funding programs on both the State and federal level are reaching their conclusion. Future legislative solutions face uncertain resolution. Substantial, sustainable and flexible funding must be provided. While it is true that many improvements have been made to the infrastructure over the last decade, major changes in global trade, technology and traffic and the resulting stress placed on the transportation network, requires that an emphasis be placed on renewed investment in system-wide improvements.

It is essential that the State take bold and decisive action to ensure that the infrastructure of the Empire State does not slip back to the deplorable conditions of the 1980s. During that time in the State's history, years of poor planning and under investment led to a crumbling infrastructure, unsafe travel and unreliable service. New York State plays a critical role in the nation's economy and its transportation system serves as its economic lifeblood. It is vital that New York State remains competitive in the global economy by providing for a transportation system that is reliable, safe, efficient and secure, while also continuing to enhance the environment and improve our quality of life.

The Panel's report, as summarized here, provides key findings on the condition of the State's transportation system and makes policy recommendations which, if followed, will ensure that the economy of New York State thrives in concert with a high quality of life. This outcome is not certain. State leaders must not delay in taking the necessary steps that will meet the transportation needs of New York State citizens today and for generations to come.

Findings and Recommendations

FINDING #1: The transportation system is under stress, and conditions will worsen, unless New York State dramatically changes the planning, investing, managing, and institutional relationships that drive the system.

Current transportation infrastructure, after years of improvement, is starting to deteriorate again and conditions will worsen quickly without significant new investment.

Restoring and maintaining our existing infrastructure is not enough. New infrastructure and system-wide improvements are also needed in order to keep up with increased demands.

Revenues for transportation operations and capital improvements are currently insufficient and will certainly not meet future needs.

The needs of an aging population and physically challenged individuals is placing stress on the transportation system and must be met with new approaches and standards.

Providing a secure transportation system in a post 9/11 world has increased safety and security expectations for the transportation system that must be met.

Institutional relationships are impeding the State's ability to address transportation challenges and seize opportunities both across modes and jurisdictions. Changes are required to take advantage of the opportunities that technology offers to substantially improve customer service, mobility, and reliability, system-wide efficiency, safety and security.

FINDING #2: The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), as the only statewide multimodal transportation agency, must lead a comprehensive effort to optimize the transportation system in New York State. The multiple transportation operations in the State must be integrated to form a seamless system that delivers significantly improved service while enhancing the environment.

New York State must expand its newly established federation of transportation agencies and consider agency consolidation where it makes the most sense.

NYSDOT must work closely with, and help strengthen, local transportation agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's).

NYSDOT must take the lead in developing and implementing solutions that improve freight movement.

NYSDOT must assume a leadership role in achieving the State's environmental and energy goals.

NYSDOT must lead the effort to link land use and transportation decisions to ensure quality communities with effective transportation systems.

NYSDOT must develop and implement solutions to manage demands.

NYSDOT must develop a State Transportation Master Plan that integrates the transportation system physically and operationally to achieve performance goals for mobility & reliability, safety, security, economic competitiveness and environmental improvement.

NYSDOT must educate the public, legislators and the media about the risks to the transportation system and the rewards to be gained by overcoming the challenges faced.

FINDING #3: New York State must develop a new strategy that provides substantial, sustainable and predictable funding dedicated to transportation investments. This strategy must reinforce the goals of mobility & reliability, safety, security, economic competitiveness and environmental enhancement; strike a balance between payments by beneficiaries and the benefits received; and provide for financial transparency and accountability to ensure continued confidence in the financing strategy.

New York State and local transportation agencies and authorities must take steps to continuously hold down costs, but this alone will not come close to providing the revenue necessary to meet our transportation needs.

New York State must examine all possible sources of revenue for transportation investments, including user fees, taxes, tolls, and private investment.

New York State must consider tolling for congestion management and revenue generation.

Conclusion

Trouble lies ahead. There will be severe consequences if New York State fails to address the transportation issues enumerated in the Panel's report - the transportation infrastructure will deteriorate, the economy will falter, jobs will be lost and the quality of life in New York State will suffer dramatically. **Bold leadership** is essential to make the institutional changes that are needed and the funding decisions that are recommended.

The stress placed on the transportation network, can be addressed through renewed investment in system-wide improvements. It is vital that New York State remains competitive in the global economy by providing for a transportation system that is reliable, safe, efficient, and secure, while continuing to enhance the environment and improve our quality of life. Multi-year funding from the State must be substantial, sustainable, predictable, and flexible.

The findings and recommendations in this report are a starting point. Comprehensive transportation planning must follow, along with legislative action. The Panel stands ready to contribute to this effort.

The full report may be downloaded from:
<http://www.utrc2.org/publications/>

Requests for a printed copy should be sent to:
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