



Accelerating the Comeback: Investing in Infrastructure

Overview

- Rhode Island ranks last in the nation -- 50th out of 50 states -- in overall bridge condition
- We have to address the problem, and the longer we wait, the more expensive it becomes
- Rhode Island lags other states along the I-95 corridor in how it finances road and bridge repairs
- Our plan will get us to 90% structurally sufficient bridges by 2024, make Rhode Island more attractive for businesses, and create about 12,000 job-years¹ over the next decade

Rhode Island's economy is out of gas. We need to create jobs by putting shovels in the ground, making it easier to do business here, and helping people build the skills they need to compete in the 21st Century economy. Moving swiftly and boldly to improve the condition of our roads and bridges and expand public transit will accelerate our economic comeback.

The Problem

Rhode Island has neglected the conditions of its roads and bridges for too long. The longer we wait to repair this infrastructure, the more expensive these projects become to fund.

- Rhode Island ranks last in the nation -- 50th out of 50 states -- in overall bridge condition
- Of the 1,162 bridges in Rhode Island, about 22 percent of them are structurally deficient
- Almost all vehicle-created road damage is from large commercial trucks

The Solution: RhodeWorks -- a 10-year strategic plan

RhodeWorks is a bold action plan that will:

- Accelerate the rebuilding of our crumbling roads and bridges by investing an additional \$1.1 billion² above current plans in transportation infrastructure over the next decade
- Fix more than 150 structurally deficient bridges in Rhode Island
- Make repairs to another 500 bridges to prevent them from becoming deficient
- Refocus efforts to expand transit
- Create about 12,000 job-years over the next 10 years
- Save taxpayers about \$1 billion in projected future costs by addressing the problem now instead of waiting
- Keep people safe
- Make Rhode Island a more attractive place for businesses to invest

¹ A job-year means simply one job for one year.

² This proposal includes a request for \$400 million in federal New Starts funds for public transit.





By the Numbers

Rhode Island lags its neighbors along the I-95 corridor in how it finances road and bridge repairs. Rhode Island is one of only two states between Maryland and Maine that does not assess a user fee on commercial trucks.³

Sample Commercial Truck User Fees for States on I-95 Corridor	
State	Commercial Truck User Fee
Maryland	\$90
Delaware (including DE Memorial Bridge)	\$41
Pennsylvania (PA Turnpike)	\$182
New Jersey (NJ Turnpike)	\$57
NJ/NY (George Washington Bridge)	\$114
New York State (I-90)	\$110
New York State (Tappan Zee Bridge)	\$49
Massachusetts (MA Turnpike)	\$22
New Hampshire	\$6
Maine	\$31.55
Connecticut	Under consideration
Rhode Island	\$0 ⁴

Under the RIDOT plan that existed in January, our infrastructure would have continued to deteriorate: projections showed that approximately 61 percent of our bridges would have been structurally sufficient by 2024 (down from approximately 78 percent today), with that percentage continuing to drop.

	Status Quo	RhodeWorks
RIDOT transportation infrastructure investment over the next decade	\$3.7 billion	\$4.8 billion
Projected % of structurally sufficient bridges by 2024 (it's approx. 78% today)	61% 	90% 

³ Rhode Island does assess a fee to cross the Newport Bridge. The funds generated from that fee support only two of Rhode Island's "signature" bridges: Mt. Hope and Newport. The other 1,160 bridges in Rhode Island also require attention.

⁴ Rhode Island does assess a fee to cross the Newport Bridge. That fee is charged by the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority, not RIDOT. The funds generated from that fee only support two of Rhode Island's "signature" bridges: Mt. Hope and Newport.



RhodeWorks proposes a 30 percent increase in funding over the state’s current infrastructure capital plan. This new accelerated funding formula would add a projected \$1.1 billion, bringing the total 10-year strategic allocation to \$4.8 billion. Under this accelerated plan, we are projected to reach 90 percent structural sufficiency of our bridges by 2024. In addition, we could create around 12,000 job-years over the next decade.

RhodeWorks: Bridge Focus

A \$700 million proposed revenue bond will accelerate the reconstruction of bridges and prevent additional bridges from falling into disrepair.

- \$300 million will support accelerating bridge repairs across the state
- \$400 million will support bridge repairs on Routes 6 and 10

A user fee for large commercial vehicles will generate the necessary revenue to pay off the bond. The user fee will be assessed electronically (no toll booths) on large commercial trucks along several bridges on 95, 195, 295, 146, 6 and 10. The proposed user fee is expected to generate about \$100 million annually. The plan explicitly prohibits RIDOT from placing a user fee on cars, motorcycles, SUVs, pick-up trucks and small commercial vehicles.

All of the funds generated from the larger commercial vehicle user fee will be exclusively devoted to transportation infrastructure. None of these funds will go into the General Fund.

RhodeWorks: Beyond Bridges

This accelerated 10-year plan re-prioritizes and streamlines funding for overall operations, pavement, and drainage programs.

RhodeWorks also reflects a new commitment toward providing increased bus and rail service as well as funding for bike lanes and accessible sidewalks. It includes a proposal to construct an express bus lane as part of the 6/10 interchange reconstruction, and it seeks to attract an additional \$400 million in federal matching funds for public transit.