



# Massachusetts Transportation Infrastructure

## **INVESTING TODAY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH: Support coordinated New England tolling or road usage charges**

The Commonwealth's transportation network, including our highways, bridges, railroads, bike and pedestrian paths, subways and buses provide mobility options for moving both goods and people. Massachusetts has made significant progress since the 2009 Transportation Reform Act and the 2013 Transportation Finance Act, but more needs to be done. Specifically, the state needs funding. **A potential ballot question to generate critical new revenue for transportation and education through a millionaire's tax is pending a decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial court, and as a result there is no guarantee it will make it to the ballot.**

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Safe and efficient transportation systems are essential for continued economic growth.*
- Mass DOT and the MBTA Financial Control Management Board have implemented cost-saving measures while continuing to invest in the repair critical transportation infrastructure. But reform, cost-savings, and the 2013 gas tax increase are not enough to close the gap in the identified needs of the state's transportation network.
- **Bridges:** Of the 5120 bridges in Massachusetts, almost 2000 are 50–70 years in age. MassDOT's Accelerated Bridge Program helped to reduce the number of structurally deficient bridges. Without a sustainable funding source, the number of structurally deficient bridges will continue to rise.
- **Modes:** No single mode can address all of our emerging transportation needs across the Commonwealth. Different modes are complementary and a multi-modal system is essential to economic growth and the quality of life for all of our citizens.
- **Tolling** is a sustainable means of collecting revenue to support needed transportation investment. It is one of the tools to meet the costs of necessary investments in transportation. Such technological improvements as all electronic tolling collection have made the collection of tolls cheaper and eliminating cash collection at booths has reduced congestion and emissions while improving safety. Tolling enables congestion relief strategies that improve travel time, reduce pollution and increase safety. **There are no free roads.** There are only toll roads and tax supported roads. A toll is a user fee, similar to a utility bill, not a tax. You only pay for a toll road when you use it. Every road needs maintenance and reconstruction, and that costs money.
- **Public investment**, from general revenue, is still an essential component for the development, maintenance and enhancement of our public transportation network.

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

- *Support new revenue for transportation, including increased use of tolling, in conjunction with the other New England states or a pilot project for collecting fees on VMTs (Vehicle Miles Traveled.)*
- *Continue to support the Financial Management Control Board as it works to improve business processes and develops a long-term plan for the T that efficiently uses its resources.*
- *Support a multiyear commitment of \$300 M/year for Chapter 90 funding, enabling municipalities to do longer term planning for capital needs.*