

## The Massachusetts Transportation Authority A Framework for Real Reform

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- Issues:
  - Last year, the fractured nature of our transportation agencies was exposed when the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority proposed to remove tolls on the Western Turnpike as the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority was preparing for a record fare increase. That combination goes against our goals of creating a unified statewide transportation system.
  - The proliferation of self-contained transportation agencies working alone rather than within statewide planning and policy has been well documented over the years.
  - In two reports this year, the independent Transportation Finance Commission and the Pioneer Institute found a transportation funding gap of \$15-19 billion over the next 20 years, not including the cost of new projects that will spur economic development.
  - The Commonwealth's transportation infrastructure is suffering from years of neglect, with more than 500 bridges rated structurally deficient, a \$2.7 billion maintenance backlog at the MBTA, and additional billions in MassPike and MBTA debt.
  
- Proposal:
  - Continue to work through the Massachusetts Mobility Compact to identify cost savings and efficiencies in the state's transportation bureaucracy.
  - Create the Massachusetts Transportation Authority (MassTrans), a new public authority established to oversee surface transportation and to administer a dedicated transportation fund.
  - Dedicate all highway and public transportation subsidies, fees, and revenues to the transportation fund.
  - Refinance existing transportation debt with MassTrans debt under a new, more efficient credit structure.
  - Replace the MassPike and MBTA boards with a single MassTrans Board, appointed by the Governor, and chaired ex-officio by the Secretary of Transportation. The Board will be responsible for distributing operating and capital resources statewide, and for financing the state's comprehensive transportation master plan.
  - Merge the MassPike and the Massachusetts Highway Department, into a single state road and bridge agency that also includes the Tobin Bridge and DCR roadways.
  - Include the Regional Transit Authorities and the MBTA under the governance umbrella of MassTrans.

- Results:
  - Improve transportation infrastructure and increase public transportation services through better use of existing resources.
  - Coordinate statewide transportation policy decisions through a single organization, enhancing the ability to prioritize projects statewide based on need.
  - Continue the reforms begun by the legislature in 2004, including positioning the Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works as the entity charged with completing a comprehensive intermodal transportation plan.
  - Realize savings by sharing costs and through consolidation of support functions.
  - Restore public confidence by ensuring transportation revenues are being spent on transportation – and that agencies are well-managed, transparent, and accountable.
  
- Process.
  - It's clear that important, fundamental changes are needed in the way we finance and govern transportation in the Commonwealth.
  - The Patrick Administration looks forward to working with the Legislature, financial community, stakeholders, and the public in a collective effort to shape new system that will allow us to move beyond our fragmented, poorly managed, and underfunded transportation system.