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INTRODUCTION

Chairs Krueger, Weinstein, Kennedy, Magnarelli and distinguished members of the Legislature, on behalf of the Department of Transportation, thank you for this opportunity to discuss Governor Hochul’s State Fiscal Year 2022-23 Executive Budget.

In early January, Governor Hochul detailed a bold new agenda for restoring faith in government and building a better, fairer, and more inclusive New York. The Department of Transportation has and will continue to play a pivotal and critical role in helping to realize this vision, which includes revitalizing and reconnecting communities; facilitating regional economic development and competitiveness through safe and reliable transportation systems; and supporting New York State’s position as a national leader in advancing climate action.

INVESTING IN RECONNECTING NEW YORK’S COMMUNITIES

Frederick Law Olmsted, considered to be the father of landscape architecture, is renowned for designing an integrated network of majestic public parks and parkways nationwide, including Central Park in Manhattan; the landscape surrounding the United States Capitol in the District of Columbia; and the Historic Delaware Park–Front Park System in Western New York. The Humboldt Parkway was once a majestic tree-lined canopy connecting Delaware Park to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park in the City of Buffalo. The Humboldt Parkway in Buffalo was recognized to be among the grandest parkways in the State. Tragically, however, the replacement of the tree-lined Parkway with the Kensington Expressway scarred the region, severed adjoining neighborhoods, demolished family homes and local businesses, and limited social and economic opportunities for those left behind. I wish I could say that this was this was an isolated occurrence. Sadly, it is not. This same fate has played out across the State between Buffalo and Brookhaven.

Under the Governor’s leadership, New York will begin the process of repairing the devastation to communities by transportation mistakes from decades ago. The new five-year capital plan, proposed for the Department of Transportation, includes nearly \$3 billion over the next five-years to right these wrongs. Instead of propagating loud, polluting highways, the Executive Budget directly invests in these community revitalization projects that will prioritize community cohesiveness, enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility, mitigate the impacts of highways on poor air quality and harmful carbon emissions, facilitate parcels for development, and provide new green spaces designed to tie together neighborhoods and small businesses.

Examples of community reconnection projects included in the plan are:

- Restoring the Humboldt Parkway in the City of Buffalo,
- Constructing the Community Grid in the City of Syracuse,
- Raising the Inner Loop freeway in the City of Rochester, and
- Covering portions of the Cross Bronx Expressway in the City of New York.

The Governor recognizes that investing in local infrastructure helps to sustain and grow communities. In addition to these larger projects, the new five-year plan will invest in revitalizing communities in every region across New York State. I look forward to working with the Legislature as we progress these projects from design through construction.

INVESTING IN A SAFE AND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Despite significant and sustained investments in our State and locally owned infrastructure, New York's renewal and modernization needs to continue to outpace the work that has been done. These needs have been exacerbated by the immediate and longer-term impacts of climate change. The increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events has resulted in record-setting rain and flooding. Moving forward, New York must take a more aggressive stance on mitigating the impacts of climate change on our communities and prioritize investments in the resiliency and hardening of our state and local roads and bridges, public transportation systems, passenger and freight rail transit systems, airports and other transportation infrastructure.

To address these priorities, and with the passage of a new five-year federal surface transportation authorization bill, Governor Hochul is advancing a new historic \$32.8 billion five-year capital plan for the New York State Department of Transportation. The new, five-year capital plan is fully aligned with federal funding commitments included in the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This unprecedented level of investment provides DOT with resources necessary to renew, modernize and continue to drive economic development in local communities. The new capital plan represents a generational opportunity to enhance safety, improve reliability, and promote climate smart polices while advancing mobility alternatives.

One of the cornerstones of the new capital plan is the targeted and record level of investments directed toward local roads and bridges in smaller municipalities throughout New York. Under the proposed capital plan, direct support for local roads and bridges increases by \$200 million per year over enacted levels, including the new Pave our Potholes Initiative, and by \$550 million over last year's Executive Budget recommendation. In parallel, the budget provides resources necessary for the Department to maintain and renew State-owned assets. Under the proposed plan, every region of the State will realize benefits.

ADVANCING NEW YORK STATE'S NATION LEADING CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

The New York State Department of Transportation has played a prominent role in developing recommendations and strategies in support of New York's nation leading Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. As noted in the recently released Climate Action Council's Scoping Plan, transportation systems have served as a catalyst for economic growth, productivity, and land use and

development patterns. Transportation investments have significantly influenced where economic growth ensues, at what rate that growth occurs, and the design and density of the built environment. The challenge we face today, however, is how to balance continued growth, facilitated by transportation, while mitigating harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

One of the more impactful supporting strategies for achieving the Climate Act's energy efficiency, housing, and land use greenhouse gas emissions emission reduction requirements is through enhancing the availability, accessibility, reliability, and affordability of public transportation services, with an emphasis on unserved and underserved communities. The Executive Budget recommendation for SFY 2022-23 recommends \$7.4 billion in direct and State authorized revenues to support and enhance public transportation services, including more than \$749 million for systems other than the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, an increase of \$158 million, or 27 percent. In addition, the budget proposal includes almost \$700 million over the plan period to support capital requirements of systems other than the MTA, an increase of \$245.0 million, or 54 percent. These capital funds will be available for providing high-quality amenities at public transportation facilities and bus stops; implementation of technologies for making public transportation easier to use and more competitive on a travel time basis, including simplified and integrated fare media; dedicated bus lanes and intelligent transportation and bus signal prioritization; and deploying new phone-based applications and technologies that make public transportation more logical and easier to understand. These enhancements will facilitate increased use of public transportation in support of the goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled.

In addition to strategic investments in public transportation, the budget increases investments in rail, freight and seaports, nearly \$450 million over the plan period, as a means of reducing the projected growth in movement of goods by trucks. The Executive Budget also commits unprecedented investments through the core capital program through diversified mobility alternatives that enhance the bicycle and pedestrian network and promote better integrated mobility-oriented development principles to help influence travel, work, and housing decisions.

The challenge of achieving the Climate Act requirements should be approached strategically and with an eye toward recognizing the opportunity and delicate balance of facilitating transportation's role in economic growth with the need to address adverse community, environmental, and human health impacts. To fully implement the requirements of the Climate Act while maintaining economic competitiveness, the State needs the full support of complementary national, regional, and local strategies.

CONCLUSION

In closing, Governor Hochul's Executive Budget and new five-year capital plan embraces and works to address both the challenges and opportunities before New York State. These fiscal commitments build upon Governor Hochul's extraordinary efforts to reconnect communities severed by interstates and other high-speed highways helps strengthen the State's infrastructure, enhances its reliability and invests in nation-leading efforts to confront climate change. Transportation is an integral part of everyday life in New York and by taking the steps outlined by the Governor, NYSDOT is ensuring a better New York for future generations.

Thank you. I would be glad to address any questions that you may have.