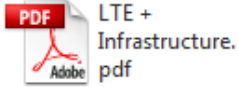


Condition of the Infrastructure

Larry Adams

4/8/2013 2:52 PM

To: Carol Woodcock / U.S. Senator Susan Collins; Elizabeth Montgomery Schneider MacTaggart / U.S. Senator Angus King; Holly Mullen (Clerk) / 126th JSC on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Representative Arthur Verow - District#21; Representative David Johnson - District#20; Rosemary Winslow / U.S. Congressman Mike Michaud; Senator Edward Youngblood - District#31;
Cc: Brewer City Council; Mayor Jerry W. Goss; Councilor Kevin O'Connell; Brewer City Manager; Eddington Board of Selectman and Town Manager;



Good afternoon:

There's only so much you can say in a 250 word Letter to the Editor.

The attached document includes additional information from the American Society of Civil Engineers, not just data previously quoted from the TRIP research group.

Following the cancellation of the Wiscasset Bypass Study in August 2011, Commissioner Bernhardt commented on Maine's existing infrastructure; those comments/concerns, captured in this document, are just as applicable today as they were then.

The Sarah Long Bridge in Kittery is a good example of an aging infrastructure. That rehab project will cost an estimated \$170 million and will soon be the focus for the MDOT, as it should be.

Remember the Waldo-Hancock Bridge?

There's always going to be another failure of a bridge or a road; we need to be proactive and not reactive when dealing with our existing infrastructure.

Our limited State and Federal tax revenue dollars need to go to repair the roads and bridges we already have before any new project should even be considered.

Thank you for your consideration, Larry Adams

LETTERS

Monday, April 8, 2013: Donations, infrastructure and elders

Road 'cents'

This letter is in regards to the condition of the roads and bridges Mainers travel on every day.

Throughout the state, approximately one in three miles of major locally or state-maintained roads and highways have deficient pavements, providing motorists with a rough ride, according to an October 2012 report by TRIP. TRIP is a nonprofit organization that works to promote policies designed to improve traffic conditions.

The report also states that rough roads cost the average Bangor driver \$375 annually and that in the Bangor urban area, 18 percent of major urban roads are rated in poor condition; 22 percent are rated in mediocre condition; 27 percent are rated in fair condition; and 33 percent are rated in good condition.

Nearly a third — 30 percent — of Maine's bridges 20 feet or longer are currently rated as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Fourteen percent of Maine's bridges 20 feet or longer are rated as structurally deficient. Sixteen percent of Maine's bridges are rated functionally obsolete, according to the organization.

Maine's traffic fatality rate on rural, non-Interstate routes is approximately seven times higher than on all other roads and highways in the state. Ninety percent of all traffic fatalities in the state in 2010 occurred on rural, non-Interstate roads, TRIP reported.

According to the Maine Revenue Forecasting Committee, the Maine State Highway Fund has a \$20.3 million dollar shortfall for the 2014-2015 biennium.

Our infrastructure is falling apart around us.

We should not be spending our limited state and federal tax dollars on the I-395/Route 9 connector project or any other new project, while we are forced to drive every day on deficient roads and bridges.

In this current fiscal environment, adding more miles to the state's transportation system without adequately maintaining the existing infrastructure doesn't make "cents."

Larry Adams

Brewer

<http://bangordailynews.com/2013/04/07/opinion/monday-april-8-2013-donations-infrastructure-and-elders/>

The facts that I quoted, regarding the condition of the roads and bridges that we traverse every day, are worrisome. These are the facts from TRIP, a national transportation research group in Washington D.C.

[http://www.tripnet.org/docs/ME Transportation by the Numbers TRIP Report Oct 2012.pdf](http://www.tripnet.org/docs/ME_Transportation_by_the_Numbers_TRIP_Report_Oct_2012.pdf)

MAINE TRANSPORTATION BY THE NUMBERS:

Meeting the State's Need for Safe and Efficient Mobility

OCTOBER 2012



- 33% of Maine's major locally and state-maintained roads and highways are either in poor or mediocre condition.
 - 40% of Bangor major urban area roads are in poor or mediocre condition.
 - 61% of Portland major urban area roads are in poor or mediocre condition.
- 30% of Maine Bridges are in need of repair or replacement.
 - 14% are structurally deficient.
 - 16 % are functionally obsolete.
- The fatality rate on Maine's non-interstate rural roads is approximately seven times higher than on all other roads in the state.
- Improving safety features on Maine's roads and highways would likely result in a decrease in traffic fatalities and serious crashes in the state. Roadway features are likely a contributing factor in approximately one-third of all fatal and serious traffic crashes.
- Driving on rough roads costs the average Maine motorist an average of \$299 annually in extra vehicle operating costs – a total of \$301 million statewide. Costs include accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. Rough roads cost the average Bangor driver \$375 annually.

Another excellent source of information on the condition of Maine's infrastructure is the American Society of Civil Engineers:

<http://www.maineasce.org/2012reportcard.htm>

<http://www.maineasce.org/MaineRC/2012MaineReportCardSummary.pdf>



- Maine's infrastructure is struggling to meet the public's needs and challenges such as underinvestment have left the state's infrastructure susceptible to falling even further behind. (ASCE Press Release page 1)
- "The health, safety and welfare of our citizens are directly tied to the quality of our infrastructure," said Will Haskell, P.E., President of the Maine Section of ASCE. "Maine's economy is built on its infrastructure. Current and forecasted funding is inadequate to meet the needs. If Maine is to grow economically and sustain its quality of life, investment in infrastructure must be a higher priority." (ASCE Press Release page 2)
- Current investment levels by the state are not sufficient to address the growing needs of the system. Over the next ten years, MaineDOT will not meet goals for roads and bridges set out by the Legislature in 2012, unless a \$150 million per year gap in funding is resolved. (ASCE Roads page 5)
 - Over 10 years @ \$150 million per year that shortfall equals a staggering \$1.5 billion dollars.
- Maine must restore investment in its highway infrastructure as a funding priority for the safety and economic well being of the state's residents and businesses. (ASCE Roads page 5)
- Maine is the highest of all New England states in miles of highway under state jurisdiction and the lowest for funding per mile. MaineDOT will not meet legislative goals for roads and bridges unless the \$150 million per year gap in funding is resolved. (ASCE Press Release page 2)

MaineDOT Commissioner Ends Plans To Build Bypass Around Wiscasset:

http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=DOT_Press_Releases&id=279591&v=article

- "At a time when we have difficulty finding the financial resources to maintain our existing infrastructure, I cannot justify the expense of building a bypass around Wiscasset." (Commissioner Bernhardt)
- "Adding more miles to our transportation system in this current fiscal environment doesn't make financial sense," said Bernhardt, "Our responsibility going forward is to manage our existing infrastructure within our existing budget."
- With current funding levels stable at best, MaineDOT concluded that the expenditure of funds on new infrastructure was not justifiable.
- "We are struggling to maintain the roads and bridges we currently have in safe and serviceable condition." (Commissioner Bernhardt)

Wiscasset Bypass Study Announcement August 1, 2011:

<http://www.maine.gov/mdot/wcs/studyannouncementaug2011.htm>

- Our responsibility going forward is to manage our existing obligations within our existing budget, and to limit adding new infrastructure to that which is shown to provide overwhelming benefits. We know federal transportation funding will continue to decrease, and the era of special earmarks for transportation projects is over. (Commissioner Bernhardt)
- Therefore, I have concluded that the long-term financial forecast – balanced against our number one priority of maintaining the infrastructure we already have and the limited benefits a bypass would provide – makes it impossible to justify that expenditure for this project. (Commissioner Bernhardt)

http://www.pressherald.com/news/bypass-plan-goes-nowhere-in-wiscasset-state-kills-it_2011-08-02.html

- Transportation Commissioner David Bernhardt said Monday that his decision to end the bypass study had little to do with the discovery of the nest and everything to do with the estimated \$100 million price of the project.
- Bernhardt, a 26-year veteran of the MDOT, was chosen to become commissioner by Gov. Paul LePage in January. Before being confirmed by the Legislature, he told the Transportation Committee that he would oppose any new bond initiatives.

- This is the second transportation planning effort in the midcoast to be canceled by the LePage administration. In March, Bernhardt announced that the state had suspended funding for the Gateway 1 project – \$2.4 million had already been spent on the long-term land-use and transportation plan for 110 miles of Route 1 from Brunswick to Prospect.
 - Gateway 1 Project - \$2.4 million spent over six years - cancelled March 2011.
 - Wiscasset Bypass Study - \$2.5 million dollars spent over 10 years with an estimated construction cost of \$100 million dollars – cancelled August 2011.

Prior infrastructure concerns conveyed by Commissioner Bernhardt are as appropriate today in April 2013 as they were when first declared in August 2011. Our economy remains weak; belts are being tightened at all levels. Ongoing budgetary disputes between federal government and state and between the state and municipalities, lead many to say that our already stagnant economy may again take a downward turn.

- The Federal government and the State of Maine are broke – there is no magic funding source; there may never be stimulus funding and earmarked or pork-barrel projects ever again - they are considered politically toxic.
- Maine State Highway Fund has a \$20.3 million dollar shortfall for FY14/15.
- Highway Account of the Federal Highway Trust Fund will be exhausted in FY15.

I-395/Route 9 Connector Study – Approximately \$2.5 million dollars has been spent over 13 years with a construction cost of \$93.24 million dollars (2011 dollars). The “2B-2 preferred alternative”, endorsed by the MDOT and the FHWA, did not meet System Linkage Needs, Traffic Congestion Needs, Study Purpose and Army Corps of Engineers Purpose in April 2009, only satisfying one of five (20%) of the original Purpose & Needs. The NEPA process continues and the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision are expected to be distributed soon.

- Many believe this project meets the same type of dismissal criteria used with the Gateway 1 and Wiscasset Bypass projects in 2011 and should also be dismissed.

Our limited State/Federal tax dollars need to be spent wisely on repairing our existing infrastructure, not on the I-395/Route 9 Connector or any other new project or study.

Until we get our fiscal house in order and restore our failing infrastructure throughout the state, I would urge you not to fund one single foot of any new highway project.

- “Adding more miles to our transportation system in this current fiscal environment doesn’t make financial sense.” I agree with the Commissioner’s Aug2011 comment.
- We ask you to support the NO-BUILD option for the I-395/Route 9 Connector.

Thank you for your time and consideration, Larry Adams