

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

GOVERNOR MURPHY MARKS COMPLETION OF TURNPIKE INTERCHANGE 14A IMPROVEMENTS

\$172 Million Project to Ease Traffic Congestion for Commuters

BAYONNE - Declaring it a win for commuters and truckers and a boon to the local economy, Governor Phil Murphy today lauded the completion of a \$172 million construction project designed to ease congestion through busy Interchange 14A on the Newark Bay-Hudson County Extension of the New Jersey Turnpike. He was joined at the ribbon cutting by NJ Turnpike Authority Executive Director John Keller, Acting NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, local elected officials, and Commissioners of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

"This is a critical infrastructure investment in the lives of tens of thousands of people who travel through Bayonne and Jersey City every day and in the futures of everyone who makes their living here in Hudson County," **said Governor Murphy**. "These improvements will reduce congestion both on the Hudson County Extension of the Turnpike and on the streets of Bayonne and Jersey City. They will also provide a boost to Bayonne's regional economic development efforts by improving access to the former Military Ocean Terminal Bayonne."

More than 50,000 vehicles travel through Interchange 14A on a typical weekday. The volume was more than the interchange could handle. A 2007 Turnpike Authority study of all Turnpike interchanges north of 8A found that 14A was the one most in need of improvements. Accident and incident rates at the interchange were high. Congestion was a daily occurrence, both at the interchange and on the streets nearby.

"Today, we're celebrating a great success story," **Turnpike Authority Executive Director John Keller said**. "We had an outdated, inadequate interchange that was a source of aggravation for drivers and a drag on the local economy. After years of careful planning, thoughtful engineering, and hard work, we now have an interchange capable of handling the heavy demands placed on it every day by the people who live and work in the area."

"Our transportation network is our biggest advantage in the global economy," **said Acting Transportation Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti, who also serves as chair of the Turnpike Authority's Board of Commissioners**. "Making investments like this one not only helps keep New Jersey competitive, but it also reduces congestion and improves safety, enhancing the quality of life for those motorists who travel through the interchange daily."

The full cost of the overall project, which was funded entirely by toll dollars, totaled \$286 million. These costs include design, utility relocation, right of way acquisition, and construction, which alone totaled \$172 million. The 14A improvements were included in the 10-year, \$7 billion capital program adopted by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority Board of Commissioners in 2008. Preliminary engineering on the project began the following year. Construction began in early 2015 and was scheduled to be completed by the fall of this year.

Several of the improvements are complete and are already open to traffic:

- The toll plaza has been widened by two lanes, one entry lane and one exit lane.
- The ramp connecting the plaza to the westbound Newark Bay-Hudson County Extension has been widened from one lane to two, providing more room for vehicles to "stack" as they wait to merge onto the westbound Extension. The additional stacking capacity makes it less likely that traffic will back up through the toll plaza.
- The capacity of the connector bridge between the toll plaza and Route 440, Route 185, and Port Jersey Boulevard has been doubled. Before, it was a single structure with one lane in each direction. That structure has been demolished and replaced with two separate two-lane structures, one carrying traffic toward the toll plaza, the other carrying it away from the toll plaza. The additional capacity will mean less congestion.
- The traffic signal near the toll plaza at Avenue E at 53rd Street has been eliminated. The round-about that replaced the signal is expected to improve the circulation of traffic through the toll plaza and on nearby city

streets.

The last major component of the Interchange 14A project is a ramp connecting traffic to Route 440 south and providing a direct route from the toll plaza to Chosin Few Way. The ramp will reduce congestion on streets around the port facility and encourage economic development by improving access to the MOTBY site. The ramp is now open following today's ribbon-cutting event.

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