



FAIR



MEDIA CONTACTS:

Michael Nitzky

347-526-1057

mnitzky@mercuryllc.com

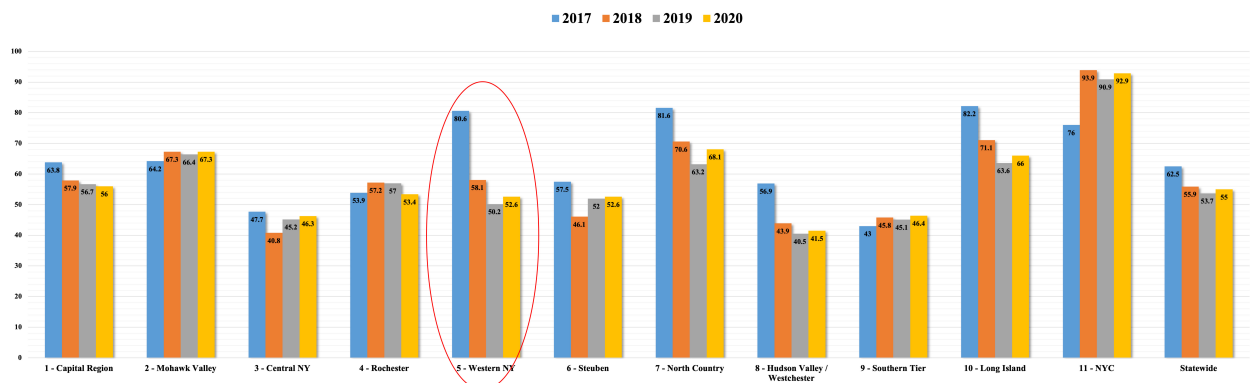
Labor Leaders, Contractors and Western New York Elected Leaders Call on Albany to Invest in Road & Bridge Repairs

Coalition calls on Gov. Hochul and Elected Leaders to Spend Wisely on State Transportation Capital Program

BUFFALO, NY (March 11, 2022)— Western New York Contractors and organized-labor leaders, representing thousands of members and employees from across New York State joined state and local elected officials to urge Gov. Kathy Hochul and Albany lawmakers to invest in repairing and maintaining deteriorating state roads and bridges.

Over the last four years, Western NY region saw the largest decline in New York state, in total pavement conditions. In 2017, 81% of pavements in Western New York were considered to be in good or excellent condition. By 2020, that number had dropped to just 53%.

2017 - 2020 Pavement Conditions by NYSDOT Region
Percent Good & Excellent
(Source: NYSDOT Pavement Condition Reports)



These poor roads conditions directly affect New Yorkers:

- The average annual extra cost of car repair and lost productivity in the Buffalo-Niagara region is \$1,866, according to the TRIP report released in January 2022.
- Statewide the total cost is \$28 Billion annually.

“Western New York desperately needs safer and less congested roads and bridges, and Albany, now more than ever, has a chance to deliver. Contractors across Western New York stand ready, willing, and able to get to work and repair our failing infrastructure, but we need our leaders at the State Capitol to green light this important investment,” said **Brad Buyers of the FAIR Committee of WNY**. “This is a once in a generational opportunity to bring real economic development back to New York State. This is about jobs, safety and doing what’s right for all New Yorkers in making it a great place to live, work, and recreate.”

Thankfully, the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, means an additional \$4.6 billion for NYSDOT capital needs over the next five years—a remarkable 52% increase in funding. That is an important first step in getting Western New York roads back to what they once were, but more needs to be done in Albany.

Governor Hochul made infrastructure a priority in her preliminary budget, proposing a new \$32.8 billion, five-year NYSDOT Capital Plan with a goal of improving the State’s roads, bridges, airports, rail facilities, ports, and other transit systems. However, her proposed NYSDOT Capital Plan, average annual spending on NYSDOT system—the maintenance and construction on the statewide network of roads and bridges maintained directly by NYSDOT—is *lower* than was funded in this year’s pre- infrastructure bill budget and is lower over the course of the entire five-year plan than the current year’s funding level extrapolated out to five years.

To remedy that, Rebuild New York Now wants to see the governor and state Legislature make additional investment of \$2 billion per year of the proposed five-year NYSDOT Capital Plan to bring the system to a state of good repair, primarily by growing the level of investment in core NYSDOT construction.

“The federal bipartisan infrastructure bill championed by Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, Representative Higgins and our Congressional Delegation, New York took an important step towards reversing the rapid decline in condition of roads and bridges across Western New York and the entire state. But the proposed NYSDOT Capital Plan grows by less than half the amount of increased funding the Infrastructure Bill brings to New York. This funding is intended to be a plus up- meaning it is in addition to existing spending programs. The people of America were promised an increase and an investment, and that’s what we are here to ensure they get. Not reallocations, not flatlined programs but healthy, robust investments in the future and growth of our country,” said **Carley Hill from Rebuild New York Now and TRIP**.

“As New York receives unprecedented funding from the federal government for crucial infrastructure projects, it is imperative we do our part and increase capital funding at the state level,” said **State Senator Sean Ryan (D-Buffalo)**. “Combining the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act with a larger state investment in infrastructure will make our roads and bridges safer, improve traffic patterns, and create thousands of construction jobs that will help bolster our economy.”

"For too long, roads and bridges in Western New York have crumbled because of chronic neglect. Patchwork annual repairs incur thousands of dollars in costs and provide only temporary relief. Motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians put their safety on the line relying on aging roadways in our region. These urgent concerns require urgent action, which is why I'm joining Rebuild New York Now, the FAIR Committee and many of my colleagues in calling on Governor Hochul to seize the opportunity to fully invest in our roads and bridges and upgrade our infrastructure," said **Assemblymember Karen McMahon (D-Amherst)**.

“Western New York roads have endured a deteriorating trajectory for years. With a record amount of funding available to municipalities as part of the federal Infrastructure Bill, now is the time to invest in NYSDOT capital needs and bring some much-needed relief to our region’s drivers, who’ve been on the hook for costly vehicle repairs due to the dilapidated state of our roads and bridges,” said **Assemblymember Jon D. Rivera (D- Buffalo)**.

“Now is the time for Western New York Infrastructure! International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 17 has a well-trained highly skilled work force ready to ‘Rebuild New York Now.’ Our members work, day and night, in cooperation with our local contractors, on Western New York roads and bridges. Their skills and abilities have been running at idle speed for years due to inconsistent funding and lack of construction ready projects. With a new influx of federal dollars set to stream into New York, our state agencies need to be poised with projects ready to start immediately and our politicians need to ensure the funding is accessible. Done correctly, construction projects are not just an expense, but a long-term investment in a local economies and communities, said **Bill Fekete, President of IUOE Local 17**.

"The bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act could be transformational for our community if New York State spends those dollars correctly. However, New York's proposed Capital Plan would squander this historic opportunity by reducing the state's contribution to infrastructure. Federal funds should supplement - not replace -- the state's infrastructure investment. The BNP urges state leaders to enact a Capital Plan with a maintenance or growth of state effort," said **Dottie Gallagher, President and CEO of the BNP**.

About Rebuild New York Now and FAIR:

[Rebuild New York Now](#) is a broad-based coalition comprising members of the construction industry, organized labor and business enterprises, representing more than 30,000 workers and their families with the common goal of investing in infrastructure to ensure the safety and economic health of New York State. [Fair Apportionment of Infrastructure Revenue](#) (FAIR) is a broad coalition of Western New Yorker businesses and persons committed to the improvement and maintenance of safe and efficient transportation infrastructure, and economic development. For more than 35 years FAIR has been committed to raising the consciousness of Safe Roads, Safe Bridges and a healthy economy for the region, actively working with local, state and federal officials to ensure that Western New York receives its FAIR SHARE of infrastructure funding.

###