

April 30, 2014

Notice of Public Meeting on High Speed Tolling Alternatives

The Maine Turnpike Authority will hold a public meeting on June 19th to receive comments on the suitability of All Electronic Toll Collection (AET) for the Maine Turnpike. AET is the collection of tolls without physical toll collectors, either through use of an E-Z Pass transponder or through photographing the license plate of each vehicle without a transponder and mailing a bill to the owner. The main alternative to AET is Open Road Tolling (ORT), which allows customers with E-ZPass transponders to pass through a toll facility at highway speeds, while still providing physical toll booths for use by motorists who want to pay cash.

The Authority has studied the issue extensively in response to concerns raised by citizens of the town of York beginning in 2006 when the Authority proposed to replace the existing York plaza with a new ORT facility. These efforts included commissioning a consulting firm, CDM Smith, to perform a risk analysis and an AET study of the toll facilities at both York and West Gardiner on the Maine Turnpike. A copy of that study and an MTA staff report on the issue are available at the Turnpike's website.

In light of the analysis provided by CDM Smith, the staff of the Maine Turnpike have completed an evaluation that can be found on pages 5-8 of the staff study. It summarizes the pros and cons of AET as follows:

All Electronic Tolling - Benefits	All Electronic Tolling - Negatives
Low Capital Cost	Higher Operational Cost
Little Environmental Impact	Significant Uncollectable Tolls
Enhanced Safety	Toll Surcharge and Fairness Issues
	Traffic Diversion Caused by Surcharges
	Unsuitable for MTA's Traffic Mix

In consequence, MTA staff will recommend to the Authority's board that the MTA not pursue implementation of AET on the Maine Turnpike but instead look at other options, including the implementation of ORT and the feasibility of adapting the existing facility at York.

The board will hold a public meeting to receive comments on this recommendation and the associated material at 6 PM on Thursday, June 19th at MTA Headquarters, 2360 Congress Street, Portland, Maine (off Exit 46). Comments may also be submitted via the "Contact Us" section of the Maine Turnpike web site (www.maineturnpike.com/contact-us.aspx).