



**Government Transparency Initiative  
New York State Bridge Authority  
February 5, 2024 Update**

**INTRODUCTION**

In October 2021, the New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA) assessed and evaluated existing policies and practices and created a plan detailing new efforts to increase transparency and accessibility in our work and operations. This update to the October 2021 NYSBA Transparency Plan provides an update on what we accomplished since 2021 and additional initiatives planned for 2024.

**DELIVERABLES ACHIEVED SINCE 2021**

- **Increase Variable Message Sign (VMS) use to alert motorists of estimated time of bridge crossings due to traffic delays:**
  - NYSBA has implemented this practice at every facility through our VMS messaging, as well as on social media and on our website at [nysba.ny.gov](https://nysba.ny.gov). When traffic conditions require heightened communication, NYSBA collaborates with the Hudson Valley Transportation Management Center (HVMTC) to disseminate our messages more extensively in the affected region.
- **Provide opt-in text service for drivers to get travel alerts in real time:**
  - NYSBA is a member of the Transportation Operations Coordinating Committee (TRANSCOM), which is a coalition of 16 transportation and public safety agencies in the New York – New Jersey – Connecticut metropolitan region. Through our TRANSCOM membership, NYSBA has gained access to 511 alerts, allows users to opt in and customize their routes and notification preferences. We initiated a public awareness campaign to inform people about this option and encourage them to sign up.
- **Ensure the smooth processing of FOIL requests and the accessibility of information and documents:**
  - NYSBA continues to respond quickly and thoroughly to all FOIL requests received, including ensuring that requests received that are meant for a different tolling entity are forwarded immediately for proper response. NYSBA also hired a General Counsel in 2023, the first in-house counsel for the Authority, which has added efficiency to the FOIL process.
- **Review and improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and accessibility:**
  - In 2023, NYSBA created a page for [Reasonable Accommodation](#) on our website. This page provides links for the general public on: procedures for implementing Reasonable Accommodation in various programs and services; notice under the ADA Act; and grievance procedures for the general public. This page also lists the designated ADA Coordinator for the Authority.
- **Highlight individual employees on the website and social media so the public can put faces to the Authority:**

- In 2022, NYSBA added photos and biographies of our [leadership and senior staff](#) so that the public can become familiar with who the people are that are running the Authority on a day-to-day basis.
- **Continue supporting community outreach efforts for various initiatives, such as the Poughkeepsie 9/44/55 initiative:**
  - NYSBA has continued to support community outreach efforts, including collaborations with external entities, providing more opportunities for the public to engage with the Authority. These include:
    - Hosting a first-of-its-kind Transportation for Life Summit in 2023 focused on suicide prevention efforts;
    - Offering the first guided hike open to the public, in partnership with NYS Parks, for people to learn about our bridges rich history in the region and our connection to New York’s extensive parks and trails network; and
    - Hosting booths at local festivals, including Walkway Over the Hudson’s Mayfest and Walktoberfest, offering public surveys and opportunities to learn more about the business that we do.
    - Quarterly meetings with NYS Parks and Walkway Over the Hudson Friends group to discuss collaborative efforts in the community.
  - NYSBA also continues to share important initiatives on behalf of our partners, including traffic alerts, educational updates and safety initiatives that the State is promoting.

## INITIATIVES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 2024

- **Strategic Plan Initiative:**
  - NYSBA is currently undergoing a Strategic Plan initiative to clearly define the Authority’s [mission](#) and values along with measurable goals and key performance indicators. This Plan once complete and approved by the NYSBA board will be publically posted on the NYSBA website.
- **Look for ways to improve language access:**
  - NYSBA is moving forward with updating our website to the Smartling translation management platform so that we can provide language translation options for the public.
- **Increased security presence to enhance the safety of the communities we serve:**
  - Increasing security presence in the community will contribute to transparency by fostering a visible and accessible approach to the safety of our bridges. NYSBA staff regularly engage in foot patrols allowing security guards to interact more closely with patrons. This not only gives the opportunity for the community to interact with NYSBA staff, but also provides the added assurance that their safety is a top priority.
- **Community Engagement:**
  - NYSBA will continue to enhance engagement with the community by participating in conferences and community meetings to facilitate discussions on upcoming projects, initiatives, and the integration of new technologies within our operations.
  - NYSBA also will continue to maintain ongoing meetings with elected officials to showcase our operations and preventive measures, enabling them to share valuable information with their constituents and amplify our outreach efforts.
  - Specific events that NYSBA is hosting in 2024 to enhance our outreach and collaboration efforts include:

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BEAR MOUNTAIN BRIDGE  
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- Meet and Greet event with Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises and Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses on March 28, 2024, to maximize procurement opportunities and educate these businesses on who we are and what we do;
  - International Cable Supported Bridge Operators Conference in October 2024, bringing in engineers from all over the world to share best practices, innovations in bridge engineering and STEM activities for future engineers.
- **Educational Campaigns:**
  - NYSBA will work to continue to develop educational campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of bridge safety, adherence to traffic rules, emergency procedures and promptly payment via Tolls by Mail to avoid DMV suspensions.
  - NYSBA has also enhanced our tolling operations by hiring a Director of Tolling, who as part of their efforts is educating the public about E-ZPass and Tolls by Mail to give customers all of the tools they need to more seamlessly utilize our facilities.
- **Increase Variable Message Sign (VMS) use:**
  - In 2024, NYSBA is undertaking a system-wide VMS replacement project. This initiative will involve installing larger, more advanced signs with enhanced capabilities and increasing the number of signs we have available for messaging to the public.