

NJTA PROPOSED 2020 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND TOLL ADJUSTMENT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. NEW JERSEY INCREASED THE STATE GAS TAX IN 2016 TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND. ISN'T THERE ENOUGH MONEY IN THE TRUST FUND TO PAY FOR THESE IMPROVEMENTS ON THE TURNPIKE AND PARKWAY?

A. The Authority does not receive gas tax revenues, and the Authority capital improvements are not funded through the Transportation Trust Fund.

Q. WHAT TAX IS USED TO RAISE REVENUES FOR THE AUTHORITY?

A. None. The Authority receives no tax revenue from any state or federal source.

Q. HOW DOES THE AUTHORITY GENERATE REVENUE?

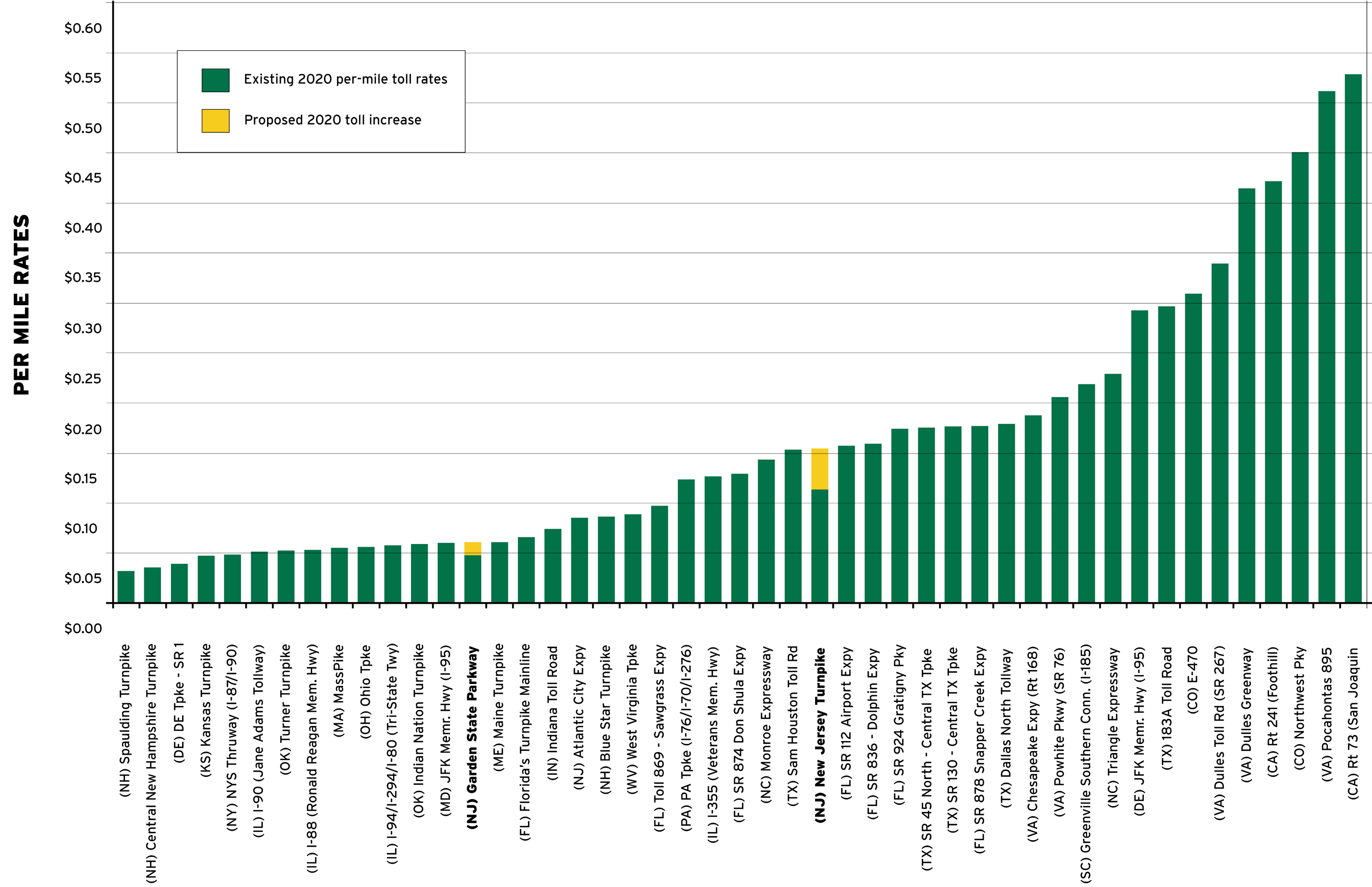
A. Mostly from tolls. Tolls represent about 92-percent of all Authority revenue. The rest is from the proceeds of contracts with the vendors who operate the service areas and the PNC Arts Center; rents and leases for cell tower sites and fiber optic lines; park and ride receipts; easements and other miscellaneous sources.

Q. HOW DO TURNPIKE AND PARKWAY TOLL RATES COMPARE TO THE RATES PAID BY DRIVERS ON OTHER TOLL ROADS?

A. As this chart shows, the Parkway toll rate per-mile would be 14th lowest among 47 U.S. toll roads; the Turnpike rate would be 27th lowest.

TOLL RATE COMPARISON - CARS

COMPARISON OF PASSENGER CAR E-ZPass PER-MILE THROUGH TRIP TOLL RATES



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Q. WHY ARE THERE STILL TOLLS? THE TURNPIKE AND PARKWAY WERE BUILT IN THE 1950S. AREN'T THE INITIAL CONSTRUCTION BONDS PAID OFF? SHOULDN'T THE TOLLS HAVE BEEN REMOVED BY NOW?

A. The toll roads have never stopped being built. As New Jersey's economy has flourished and its population grown, the toll roads have always grown to meet the challenge. Those initial construction bonds paid for a Turnpike that was 118 miles long and four lanes wide. Today, the Turnpike is 148 miles long and as many as 14 lanes wide. Likewise, the Parkway has grown from 164 miles long and four or six lanes wide to 173 miles long and as many as 15 lanes wide. As measured by lane miles, each roadway has more than doubled in size since it was first built. The growth has been financed with toll revenue.

Q. WHAT DID THE AUTHORITY DO WITH THE REVENUE FROM THE LAST TOLL INCREASE?

A. The additional toll revenue enabled the Authority to tackle an ambitious \$7 billion capital program. The centerpiece of that program was the widening of the Turnpike between interchanges 6 and 9. At a final cost of \$2.13 billion, the widening added 170 lane miles and represented the largest capital improvement in the history of the Authority.

Q. LARGEST IN THE HISTORY? EVERY TIME I HEAR ABOUT A BIG GOVERNMENT PROJECT, IT SEEMS, I HEAR ABOUT DELAYS AND COST OVERRUNS. IS THAT WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

A. Most definitely not. The 6-to-9 Widening was a massive, complex program. At the height of construction, it was the largest ongoing roadway project in the Western Hemisphere. It involved 31 separate construction contracts. Nevertheless, the Authority completed it on schedule and more than \$300 million under budget.

Q. ON TIME AND UNDER BUDGET, SURE. BUT \$2.13 BILLION IS STILL A LOT OF MONEY. WAS IT WORTH IT?

A. Undoubtedly. The widening has had a real impact on the quality of life for people who travel on the Turnpike in Central Jersey. The additional lanes and other improvements relieved one of the worst bottlenecks in the state. A driver heading south on a typical Friday night now spends fewer than five minutes traveling from Interchange 9 to around the Molly Pitcher Service Area. That drive used to take 30 minutes. The widening also had the effect of making one of the safest highways in America even safer. When Authority traffic engineers compared crash rates in the 6-to-9 corridor for the two years before the widening program began to crash rates for the two years after it was completed, they found a decrease of more than 50 percent. Time saved, lives saved. Yes, it was worth it.

Q. WAS THE TURNPIKE 6-TO-9 WIDENING THE ONLY IMPORTANT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT MADE WITH THE REVENUE RAISED BY THE LAST TOLL INCREASE?

A. Far from it. As anyone who lives or works in a Shore county or travels to the Shore during the summer can tell you, congestion on the Parkway has been relieved with the addition of a third lane in each direction for 45 miles between South Toms River and Egg Harbor Township. Major bridges were replaced and rehabilitated. Important safety improvements were made. Partial interchanges were completed. Congested and crash-prone interchanges were expanded and reconfigured to accommodate traffic and improve safety.



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Q. WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU PROPOSING TO DO WITH TOLL RATES AT THIS TIME?

A. The proposed adjustment will increase tolls on the Turnpike by 36-percent. The average trip, which now costs \$3.50, will cost \$4.80. The proposed adjustment will increase tolls on the Parkway by 27-percent. The average trip, which now costs \$1.11, will increase by 30 cents. Beginning in 2022, tolls will be indexed at an amount to be determined but in no case more than three percent per year. The proposal also calls for adding a toll at Interchange 19W and making minor adjustments to a toll discount program for buses.

Q. INDEXING? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN, AND WHY ARE YOU DOING IT?

A. Tolls will be adjusted every year to keep up with rising costs. The Authority will no longer have to ask for big toll increases every decade or so to fund capital improvements. The additional revenue from the modest annual increases will provide a predictable and sustainable source of capital funding.

Q. WHERE IS INTERCHANGE 19W AND WHY IS IT BEING TOLLED?

A. Interchange 19W provides drivers with access between the Western Spur of the Turnpike and the Meadowlands Complex. Typically, it has been open only on days when there is a Giants or Jets game or some other big event at the complex. When 19W is open, it relieves traffic at Interchange 16W because drivers are able to access the Complex directly from the Turnpike rather than paying the toll at 16W and accessing the Complex from Route 3. The Authority now plans to leave 19W open at all times. Drivers going to games, concerts, or races at the Complex, or visiting American Dream, will be able exit directly from the Turnpike into the Complex for the same toll they would have paid at 16W if 19W were not open.

Q. WILL THE CURRENT TOLL DISCOUNTS REMAIN IN EFFECT?

A. Yes. The Authority has proposed a change to the toll schedule to standardize bus discounts in order to comply with the Federal-Aid Highway Act, but other existing discounts will not be changed. The Authority will continue to provide discounts for senior citizens and drivers of low-emission vehicles. New Jersey E-ZPass customers who travel on the Turnpike at off-peak times will continue to pay lower toll rates. Trucks will continue to pay lower rates with E-ZPass on the Turnpike and during off-peak hours on the Parkway. The Truck Volume Discount and the Garden State Parkway trailer discount will remain in effect. You can learn more about available discounts at www.njta.com/toll-calculator.

Q. DOES THE CAPITAL PROGRAM YOU ARE PROPOSING TO FUND WITH THIS TOLL INCREASE INCLUDE WORK THAT WILL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR NEW JERSEY DRIVERS THE WAY THE LAST CAPITAL PROGRAM DID?

A. Yes. The proposed capital program calls for widening the southern end of the Turnpike between Interchanges 1 and 4 and widening near Interchange 13; widening the Newark Bay-Hudson County Extension of the Turnpike; widening the Parkway for most of the distance between Wall Township (milepost 98) and Paramus (exit 163); replacing the Delaware River-Turnpike Bridge, which connects the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Turnpikes; replacing the Laderman Bridge on the Western Spur of the Turnpike; and adding the missing movements at 10 Parkway interchanges. It also includes projects to convert the Turnpike and Parkway to all-electronic tolling.

Q. ALL-ELECTRONIC TOLLING? WHEN ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO THAT?

A. There is not a specific plan at this time. You might have noticed that many toll agencies in neighboring states have started collecting all tolls electronically. The New Jersey Turnpike Authority is almost certain to consider some form of AET in the future.

