

III. NEW ENGLAND TRANSPORTATION HIGHLIGHTS

The following overviews highlight the most important transportation issues in each state. Ongoing and planned projects will be detailed further in each transportation area. Information is based on personal interviews with transportation officials, state Transportation Improvement Programs and other planning documents.

A. HIGHLIGHTS BY STATE

Maine

As other New England states, Maine is in a period of change, adjusting to the slow economic growth of the nineties. Maine recognizes the need for a transportation policy that enhances the environment, conserves energy and simultaneously spurs productivity. The objective of Maine transportation planners is to move goods and people efficiently while minimizing environmental impacts and reducing fuel consumption.

The State Transportation Investment Program for 1992-1993 addresses capital improvements for highway, bridge, air, ports and marine, rail and highway mass transportation. This 2-year program represents approximately \$268 million (from state and federal funding) in capital improvements in these areas.

The Maine Transportation Capital Improvement Planning Commission prepared a study in 1993 entitled "Transportation to the Year 2002" which addresses the following modes: cargo ports, multiple occupancy highway vehicles, rail, aviation and highways. This planning document analyzes the present situation of these transportation areas and presents recommendations for future strategies with budget analysis.

It is their recommendation to develop a more intermodal transportation policy further utilizing the mass transit systems of buses and water ferries, highways and bridges, commercial marine transportation, aviation and the rail system.

According to Maine transportation officials, the most important issues include the level of federal funding the state receives, the updating of state highways and bridges, the environmental impact of transportation planning, the Clean Air Act Amendment, and maximizing the efficiency of multi-modal transportation with an improved and restored rail, water and public transit system. Transportation planners must look at other modes of transportation before expanding highway lanes. However, upgrading the highways (especially those connecting Canada) and bridges represents an important part of the planning.