

**Proceedings of the Planning Session of the Greater New Orleans  
Expressway Commission (GNOEC), Thursday, October 30, 2025, 10 AM,  
South Shore conference room, Metairie, Louisiana 70002**

Call to Order

Chairman Tim Coulon called the session to order at 10:01 AM.

Attending

Commissioners Present: Tim Coulon, Chairman; Ralph Cox, Jr., Vice Chairman; James Tucker, Treasurer; Justin Clinton, Secretary; and Donald Sharp, Assistant Secretary Treasurer.

Others Attending: Carlton Dufrechou, Melissa Phillpott, Robert Graham, Thea Andras, Mike Kelly, Eileen Barthe', GNOEC; Mr. Shane Guidry, representing Governor Landry; and Craig Watson, Blue Williams.

Opening

Chairman Coulon opened the meeting reminding all attending of the GNOEC's mission to make all our commuters' trips across the world's longest bridge safe and timely. Mr. Coulon welcomed Shane Guidry, Governor Landry's advisor for metro New Orleans. Mr. Coulon noted that the purpose of the planning session was to review existing operations and to identify potential enhancements for the future. Mr. Dufrechou outlined the agenda.

Current Investigations

Electronic/Open Road Tolling:

The GNOEC's new toll system will have the ability to continue tag and cash/credit card tolling or convert to All Electronic Tolling (AET)/Open Road Tolling in the future. Seven companies have expressed interest in submitting proposals. Anticipated budget is \$6M. AET has positives and negatives. A positive could be a slight reduction in personnel expenses and slightly faster entry onto the south bridge. Primary negative is the potential for a significant revenue loss (25%) due to increased slippage (nonpayment of tolls from camera billing). Incremental approach was recommended beginning with installing the new system and attempting to increase tag use.

Additional Tag Only Lane:

During morning commuting hours, toll booth lanes 1, 3, and 4 operate as Tag/Cash/Credit Card and lanes 2 and 5 operate as Tag only. Lane 5 closes after commuting (11 AM). To facilitate tag commuters entering the bridge, staff proposed changing lane 4 to Tag only mode during morning commutes. Lanes 1 and 3 would remain Tag/Cash/Credit Card. The proposal may induce more use of Tags which would enhance operations. Suggested timeline to implement is 60 days.

Alert Messaging:

Commuters are notified of incidents on the Causeway via the multiple message boards on the bridge, text messaging to commuters enrolled in the Alert system, and the 1700 AM traffic radio. Currently, just under 10,000 commuters are

enrolled in the Alert system. System enrollees select the periods they wish to receive messages (typically their commuting times). Incidents occurring beyond that period are not transmitted to those enrollees. Suggestions were to investigate geofencing in order to override selected times and to enhance enrollment via outreach on message boards and in toll tag stores. Carlton will also contact the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) about relaying our alert messages on the LA DOTD's I10 and I12 Message Boards.

#### Commuter Comments:

Thirty-four responses were received from our recent message to commuters asking their opinions. Comments/recommendations included: greater enforcement of speed limits and speed cameras (13), no hands-on phone use/texting (12), more enforcement of left lane for passing only (7), more enforcement for no tailgating (4), re-stripe lanes (3), more lights on bridge (3), emergency vehicles should not speed (1), and post number of crashes (1). Discussion followed. Enforcement remains strong. Re striping the bridge has been approved and will be underway within the next year. Replacement of lights on the drawbridge is underway.

#### Five Year Review and Future Projections

Statistics were presented for following:

- Police and MAP including enforcement numbers, response numbers, crashes, and bridge closures for period of 2019-2024. Discussion followed.
- Traffic and Revenue spreadsheet detailing annual traffic and revenue numbers and apparent trends for period of 2019-2024. Discussion followed.
- Expense spreadsheet detailing actual expenses for all categories for period of 2019-2024. Discussion followed.
- Future Projections detailing anticipated revenue and expense outlook for next 10 years. Discussion followed.

#### Ideas to Enhance Sustainability

##### Transfer App Roads and Signals:

When the original Causeway bridge was built in 1956, the GNOEC also constructed Causeway Blvd. from the bridge to Jefferson Hwy and Veterans Hwy from Causeway Blvd to New Orleans on the south shore and Causeway Blvd from the bridge to Covington as well as the North, East, and West Approach Roads on the north shore. As our region grew and traffic patterns changed, Causeway Blvd and Veterans became primary arteries for south shore traffic and Causeway on the north shore from LA 22 to Covington became a primary thoroughway for St. Tammany. Thus, in the 1990s, LA DOTD assumed maintenance responsibilities for these roadways. With continued growth on the north shore and associated changes in traffic, the North, East, and West Approach Roads in Mandeville have become primary east-west connectors for St. Tammany residents. Transferring the remaining roads to DOTD is prudent. Chairman Coulon is working with Gov. Landry's office to coordinate. Savings to the GNOEC would be at least \$1.3M annually.

Huey P. Long (HPL)/Interagency:

Huey P. Long (HPL)/Interagency:

The GNOEC has provided police patrols and traffic management on the HPL since 1986. Annual expenses for the HPL/Interagency transfers are about \$2M. These expenses are offset by revenue received from Hwy Fund #2. In most years, revenue exceeds expenses. The remainder may be used for GNOEC capital improvements. Hwy Fund #2 will continue until 2034. Thus, it is beneficial for the GNOEC to continue to provide traffic management services on the HPL until that time.

#### Wrap Up

Following items were identified for further investigation:

- Investigate geofencing to enhance wider distribution of Alert messages;
- Coordinate Alerts with RPC and DOTD Traffic Management Center;
- Review citation fines with DAs;
- Review bond agreements in regard to AET/Open Road Tolling in future; and
- Beginning in 2028, consider extending Hwy Fund #2

#### Archer Study


Recommendations from Archer Compensation Study were reviewed.

#### Closing/Next Meeting

Chairman Coulon expressed his appreciation to our other commissioners and staff for an informative and productive planning session. The meeting concluded at 1 PM. The next regular GNOEC meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 3, 2025, in our north shore conference room.



Tim Coulon  
Chairman

  
Justin Clinton  
Secretary