



Urban America's rough roads costing drivers \$400 a year

September 22, 2010

Twenty-four percent of the nation's major metropolitan roads – interstates, freeways and other critical local routes – have pavements in poor condition, resulting in rough rides and costing the average urban motorist \$402 annually in additional vehicle operating costs, according to a new report released today by TRIP, a national transportation research group.

TRIP's report, *"Hold the Wheel Steady: America's Roughest Rides and Strategies to Make our Roads Smoother,"* identifies the top-twenty urban regions (500,000+ population) with the greatest share of major roads and highways with pavements in poor condition, and the top-twenty urban regions where motorists pay the highest vehicle operating cost (VOC) because of roads in poor condition. Driving on roads in disrepair increases consumer costs by accelerating vehicle deterioration and depreciation, increasing the frequency of needed maintenance, and increasing fuel consumption and tire wear.

Pavement in Poor Condition		Highest VOC		
1	San Jose	64%	San Jose	\$ 756
2	Los Angeles	63%	Los Angeles	\$ 746
3	Honolulu	62%	San Francisco-Oakland	\$ 706
4	Concord, CA	58%	Honolulu	\$ 701
5	San Francisco-Oakland	58%	Concord, CA	\$ 692
6	New Orleans	55%	New Orleans	\$ 681
7	New York-Newark	53%	Oklahoma City	\$ 662
8	San Diego	50%	San Diego	\$ 654
9	Indio-Palm Springs	47%	New York-Newark	\$ 640
10	Baltimore	46%	Riverside-San Bernardino	\$ 632
11	Kansas City	45%	Sacramento	\$ 611
12	Riverside-San Bernardino	44%	Tulsa	\$ 610
13	Oklahoma City	42%	Indio-Palm Springs	\$ 609
14	Sacramento	42%	Baltimore	\$ 603
15	Omaha, NE	42%	Omaha, NE	\$ 587
16	San Antonio	39%	Kansas City	\$ 587
17	Detroit	38%	San Antonio	\$ 549
18	Philadelphia	37%	Dallas-Fort Worth	\$ 539
19	Tulsa	36%	Detroit	\$ 536
20	Dallas-Fort Worth	34%	Albuquerque	\$ 527

The TRIP report also provides urban pavement conditions and extra vehicle operating costs for urban regions with population between 250,000 and 500,000 residents. Additional pavement condition and vehicle operating costs can be found in the full report and appendices.

"With state and local governments facing looming budget deficits and without a long-term federal surface transportation program in place, road conditions are projected to get even worse in the future," said Will Wilkins, TRIP's executive director. "Repairing rough urban roads could ease the burden on drivers and provide a smoother ride while creating jobs and boosting the economy." The FHWA found that every \$1 billion invested in highway construction would support approximately 27,800 jobs, including approximately 9,500 in the construction sector, approximately 4,300 jobs in industries supporting the construction sector, and approximately 14,000 other jobs induced in non-construction related sectors of the economy.

According to the U.S. DOT, through 2025, the U.S. faces a \$189 billion shortfall in the cost to maintain urban roadways in their current condition and a \$375 billion shortfall in the cost to make significant improvements to urban roadways. State transportation funding is threatened by the continuing fiscal crisis in state budgets, which in fiscal year 2010 prompted a \$74.4 billion reduction in overall state spending. States' financial needs continue to far surpass expenditures, with the National Governors Association projecting total state shortfalls for 2010 – 2011 of more than \$127 billion.

The lack of a long-term federal surface transportation program, which would provide a predictable level of federal funding, is impeding the ability of states to plan and implement large-scale rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. Congress is currently debating over the long-range federal surface transportation program. The current program, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), was originally scheduled to expire on September 30, 2009. Following five short-term extensions by Congress, the legislation now expires on December 31, 2010.

Highway preservation projects provide significant economic benefits by improving travel speeds, capacity, load-carrying abilities and safety, and reducing operating costs for people and businesses. Roadway repairs also extend the service life of a road, highway or bridge, which saves money by either postponing or eliminating the need for more expensive future repairs.

According to the TRIP report, transportation agencies can reduce pavement life cycle costs by adopting a pavement preservation approach that emphasizes making early initial repairs to pavement surfaces while they are still in good condition and the use of higher-quality paving materials, which reduces the cost of keeping roads smooth by delaying the need for costly reconstruction.

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