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## TRIP Report Highlights New Mexico's Surface Transportation Infrastructure Needs

New Mexico will need to make a number of improvements to its surface transportation infrastructure in order to sufficiently support that state's existing industries and future economic growth, the nonprofit association TRIP asserts in a report released Wednesday.

"To achieve sustainable economic growth, New Mexico must proceed with numerous projects to improve key roads, bridges, highways and transit systems," according to the report. This is the second report on New Mexico that TRIP has released this year. That first report, "New Mexico Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State's Need for Safe and Efficient Mobility" (see related AASHTO Journal story [here](#)), came out in February and likewise documented the need for more investment in surface transportation infrastructure.

The current report goes beyond just a broad overview by identifying specific projects needed to provide the Land of Enchantment with a transportation network that can support the ever-increasing movement of people and goods statewide. TRIP ranked each project based on such criteria as short-range economic benefits, potential job creation, the expected level of improvement in the facility's condition, the upgrade in access and mobility, and the long-term enhancement when it comes to economic performance and competitiveness regionally or statewide.

The top-priority projects encompass both ones that expand or modernize highways and bridges and others that would improve rail and public transportation, according to the report. The most urgent projects highlighted include expanding U.S. 491 to four lanes between Twin Lakes and Naschitti; reconstructing various interchanges along Interstate 25; and adding two lanes to U.S. 82 from Artesia to Lovington.

"Increasing investment in New Mexico's transportation network of roads, bridges and transit is vital to boosting the state's economy and the quality of life of its residents," TRIP Executive Director Will Wilkins said in a statement. "In the short term, transportation investment creates good jobs, but the long-term benefits of an efficient transportation system connecting New Mexico's residents, communities and businesses can span generations."

The 19-page report, "The Top 50 Transportation Projects to Support Economic Growth and Quality of Life in New Mexico," is available [here](#).