

## Top five transportation headaches and remedies identified

AASHTO and TRIP release report of problems plaguing the nation  
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A new report released jointly Jan. 13 by AASHTO and TRIP entitled “America’s Top Five Transportation Headaches—and Their Remedies” identifies crumbling roads and bridges, growing traffic jams, crowded transit systems and rail cars, an unacceptably high rate of traffic crashes and fatalities and insufficient funding as the top five transportation headaches ailing the nation.

The report also prescribes five remedies for the nation’s transportation headaches, which include moving ahead with ready-to-go transportation construction projects, putting unemployed workers back on the job (particularly in the hard-hit construction sector), using the most cost-effective construction techniques and materials and following a transportation investment strategy that will provide the nation with a transportation system that will improve mobility, safety and the condition of roads, bridges and transit systems throughout the nation.

“Fast relief for transportation headaches is one of the immediate benefits we can see from the economic recovery legislation being sought by President-elect Obama. States are ready to move thousands of ready-to-go highway projects that can support 1.8 million jobs,” said Executive Director John Horsley. “Long-term, these transportation investments will build or preserve assets that will help the economy for years.”

The top headache is aging and deteriorating roads, bridges and transit systems. One-quarter of major urban roadways are in poor condition, 25% of the nation’s bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete and roughly half of the nation’s transit busses and rail cars have exceeded their service life or will do so within the next six years.

The remedy for this headache is to begin work immediately on “ready-to-go” transportation projects. State transportation departments have 5,280 highway and bridge projects worth \$64 billion that can be under contract within 180 days of the approval of additional funding. An additional 736 transit projects totaling \$12.2 billion are ready to begin within 90 days if funding is made available.

For the rest of the headaches and remedies, see the February Spanning section of Roads & Bridges.