



## Report: Shreveport/Bossier City bridges under scrutiny and in need of attention

NOVEMBER 10, 2018



A national transportation research group says over 1,800 bridges in the state of Louisiana are deemed to have significant deterioration or other major issues. Northwest Louisiana plays a significant role in those findings.

Everyone knows there are a lot of bridges in the Shreveport/Bossier City area. That's a given when you've got a huge river that separates the two largest cities.

So there's a good chance you cross a bridge somewhere, even if it's not the Red River, which is why it's so important to pay attention to a new report that details the structure and the safety of our local bridges.

"Every day, on average 628,000 vehicles in the Shreveport area cross a structurally deficient bridge," said Rocky Moretti, TRIP and research director.



The TRIP report lists the top 25 structurally deficient bridges in the Shreveport/Bossier area, with the lowest rating for deck, substructure and superstructure and the top 25 most heavily traveled structurally deficient bridges in the area. Louisiana has nearly 13,000 bridges.

"The report finds that 13 percent of state and locally maintained bridges in the Shreveport area are structurally deficient. If you look at the actual numbers there's a 130 bridges in the region that are structurally deficient. These are

bridges that have been inspected and they've seen significant deficiencies and they need to be repaired," said Moretti.

[These numbers and the findings come from a national non-profit transportation research group called TRIP.](#) The information is gathered and consolidated from what local bridge inspectors find during their routine inspections.

"It's just really wear and tear over the years. And in the process of trying to save money the bridges are going bad," said Dennis from Shreveport.

So how does that 13 percent number compare with the rest of the country?

"If you look at nationally where approximately 13 percent of bridges are deficient, it gives you a sense of the regions bridges are unfortunately are far above the national average in the share that are structurally deficient," said Moretti.

"The term structurally deficient carries some shock value, of course. It certainly catches the attention of anyone who's reading the report, but the most important take away at least from DOTD's perspective is that if there's a bridge or an overpass, that type of structure that's open to traffic....that means it's safe to travel over, its been deemed safe to travel over," said Erin Buchanan, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development spokeswoman.

Buchanan also points out that several of the bridges listed in the report are getting work done on them now or in the near future, including several bridges or overpasses on Interstate 20 in Bossier City, the Texas Street Bridge and the Jimmie Davis Bridge.

DOTD does the best it can, but when the DOTD secretary says the problems are only likely to get worse because of stagnant funding, you can be assured it will likely get worse. So the inspections become even more important.

"Certainly, there are structures that are on a more frequent inspection cycle. Jimmie Davis Bridge is on a six-month cycle, the Louisiana 1 Caddo Lake Bridge is on a six-month cycle. Some of our older structures, the Texas Street Bridge was built in the 1930's so as these structures age obviously we take a closer look at all the components," said Buchanan

Ultimately, we all know it comes down to money. TRIP says it would cost \$1.9 billion to get all the bridges in the state of Louisiana off the structurally deficient list. That's why they have put together this list now.

"Addressing bridge challenges takes a number of years and so it will be critical in terms of state transportation funding, but also local transportation funding to put in place the type of bridge repair budget that allows over a period of years to make improvements and start to improve these numbers," said Moretti.