

TIMES HERALD-RECORD

SERVING THE CATSKILLS AND HUDSON VALLEY

Report: 13% of Hudson Valley bridges in poor condition

FRONT PAGE



The Mill Street bridge, over Quassaick Creek in Newburgh/New Windsor, is the second-worst ranked bridge among the 25 cited in the Hudson Valley as poor/structurally deficient [KEELY MARSH/FOR THE TIMES HERALD-RECORD]

By Michael Randall
Times Herald-Record

GOSHEN – A new report from a nonprofit group that researches and evaluates the conditions of the roads we travel on says 13 percent of the Hudson Valley’s bridges are in poor, structurally deficient condition.

Another 64 percent are in fair condition, while only 23 percent are in good condition.

At a news conference Tuesday at the Orange County Chamber of Commerce office, Carolyn Bonifas Kelly, associate director of research for the nonprofit, The Road Information Project (TRIP), said those structurally deficient bridges carry almost 2.6 million vehicles per day.

Her study included 2,551 bridges in Orange, Ulster, Dutchess, Rockland, Putnam, Westchester and Columbia counties – everything from overpasses and culverts 20 feet or longer, up to full-length bridges spanning rivers.

Kelly said the 329 rated structurally deficient are “safe for travel” now but will need repair or replacement soon.

“The (state) Department of Transportation does a tremendous job with the funds they have,” Kelly said. “But unless New York can increase available funding, bridges will continue to deteriorate and costs will continue to increase.”

Kelly said the Federal Highway Administration has estimated it would cost \$3.6 billion to repair or replace all 1,757 New York bridges statewide currently rated poor or structurally deficient.

Kelly’s report was based on the latest inspection data available from the FHA, compiled in 2018. Every bridge is inspected at least once every two years.

Kelly said if bridges deteriorate to the point they must be closed to all traffic, or only be open to

lower-weight vehicles, that can have an impact on everyone from emergency responders to school buses, commercial vehicles and farm equipment, who will all need to make longer trips to get where they need to go.

“Good infrastructure is also the cornerstone of bringing in good jobs,” said Mike Oates, president and CEO of Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation. “I hope this (report) leads to action, so we’re not at a competitive disadvantage with other states.”

New York ranks 12th among the 50 states, with 10 percent of its bridges in poor or structurally deficient condition.

But where will the money to fix them come from? John Corlett, legislative committee chairman with AAA New York, said the federal gas tax is a primary source of funding that ends up in state hands for roads and bridges, but Congress hasn’t raised that tax in 23 years.

“It’s a constant uphill battle,” said John T. Cooney Jr., executive director of the Construction Industry Council of Westchester and the Hudson Valley. “Without increased funding, you lose the battle.”

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Mid-Hudson’s worst bridges

The following bridges from Orange and Ulster counties are among the 25 rated as poor/structurally deficient in the Hudson Valley, starting with the worst (along with ranking):

2. Mill Street over Quassaick Creek in Newburgh/New Windsor; it is currently closed some days as it undergoes repair
4. Dock Street, Rondout Creek, Kingston. (low weight limit)

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WARNING: POOR-CONDITION BRIDGES AHEAD

Report: 13% in Hudson Valley structurally deficient

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The Thruway bridge over Route 207 in New Windsor is cited in a report as one of the 25 most structurally deficient bridges in the Hudson Valley. (KEELY MARSH/FOR THE TIMES HERALD-RECORD)

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6. Pine Hill Road over the Thruway, Woodbury
 12. South Street over Wawayanda Creek, Warwick
 13. Saw Kill bridge over County Road 30, Woodstock
 19. Thruway over Route 207, New Windsor
 20. Route 209 over Esopus Creek, Town of Ulster
 24. Route 52 over Tin Brook, Walden
- The following are among the top 25 poor/structurally deficient bridges with the highest average daily traffic:
10. Thruway over Route 207, New Windsor
 13. Route 213, Wallkill River, Esopus
 14. County Road 25 over Thruway, Rosendale
 15. Hurley Avenue over Thruway, Kingston
 - 19 and 22. Interstate 84 over Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks, Montgomery
 21. I-84 over Metro-North Port Jervis line, Town of Wallkill
 23. Route 9W over County Road 107/Quaker Avenue, Cornwall
 24. Route 9W over Moodna Creek, New Windsor