

## REPORT FINDS U.S. INTERSTATE SYSTEM NEEDS TO BE RECONSTRUCTED, MODERNIZED

Interstate Highway System reaches 65 years old



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The U.S. [Interstate Highway System](#) will need to be rebuilt and expanded to meet the nation's growing transportation needs, according to a report released today by [TRIP—a national transportation research nonprofit](#).

As the system reaches 65 years old, it is congested, carries significant levels of travel—particularly by large trucks—and lacks adequate [funding](#) to make needed repairs and improvements, [TRIP says](#).

The report, [America's Interstate Highway System at 65: Meeting America's Transportation Needs with a Reliable, Safe &](#)

[Well-Maintained National Highway Network](#), looks at the Interstate system's use, condition and benefits, and the findings of a 2019 report prepared by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) at the request of Congress as part of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, on the condition and use of the Interstate system and actions required to restore and upgrade the Interstate system.

According to the 2019 TRB report, the Interstate system has a persistent and growing backlog of physical and operational deficiencies as a result of age, heavy use, and deferred reinvestment, and is in need of major reconstruction and modernization. The TRB report concludes that annual investment in the Interstate Highway System should be increased approximately two-and-a-half times, from \$23 billion in 2018 to \$57 billion annually over the next 20 years.

The TRIP report found that from 2000 to 2019, travel on the Interstate system has increased by 26%—a rate nearly triple that at which new lane capacity was added. As a result, 47% of urban Interstate highways are considered congested during peak hours. Due to the [COVID-19 pandemic](#), vehicle travel on U.S. highways dropped by as much as 45% in April 2020 (compared to April 2019) but [rebounded to 6% below April 2019 levels by April 2021](#).

TRIP's report finds that while [pavement](#) smoothness on most segments of the Interstate system is acceptable, the crumbling foundations of most highway segments need to be reconstructed, and that continued resurfacing—rather than addressing underlying foundational issues—is resulting in diminishing returns and results in shorter periods of pavement smoothness.

As the aging system's foundations continue to deteriorate, most Interstate highways, [bridges](#), and interchanges will need to be rebuilt or replaced, the TRB report finds. According to the TRIP report, pavements on 11% of Interstate highways are in poor or mediocre condition. Three percent of Interstate bridges are rated in poor/structurally deficient condition and 57% are rated in fair condition.

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SOURCE: TRIP