

KEY FACTS ABOUT NEW JERSEY'S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND FEDERAL FUNDING

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The nation's roads and highways are the backbone of the U.S. transportation system, allowing Americans to travel approximately 3 trillion miles annually. But conditions on the system are deteriorating, as the need for transportation improvements far outpaces the amount of funding available. As New Jersey and the nation look to rebound from the current economic downturn, making needed improvements to roads, bridges and public transit could provide a significant boost to the state's economy by creating jobs and stimulating long-term economic growth as a result of enhanced mobility and access.

Congress is currently deliberating over a long-range federal surface transportation program, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU was originally set to expire on September 30, 2009. Following a series of short term continuing resolutions, the current program now expires December 31, 2010. The level of funding and the provisions of a future federal surface transportation program will have a significant impact on future highway and bridge conditions and safety as well as the level of transit service in New Jersey, which, in turn, will affect the state's ability to improve its residents' quality of life and enhance economic development opportunities.

Federal Funding for Our Nation's Surface Transportation System Generates Jobs; Making Needed Highway Improvements Assures Economic Recovery and Growth

- Our nation's highways, transit systems, railroads, airports, ports and inland waterways drive our economy, enabling industry to achieve the growth and productivity that have made America strong and prosperous.
- A U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) study concludes that for each \$1 billion of federal spending on highway construction nationwide nearly 28,000 jobs are generated annually.
- The Federal Highway Administration estimates that each dollar spent on road, highway and bridge improvements results in an average benefit of \$5.20 in the form of reduced vehicle maintenance costs, reduced delays, reduced fuel consumption, improved safety, reduced road and bridge maintenance costs and reduced emissions as a result of improved traffic flow.
- Seventy-three percent of the \$287 billion worth of commodities delivered annually from sites in New Jersey is transported by trucks on the state's highways. An additional 19 percent is delivered by parcel, U.S. Postal Service or courier, which use multiple modes, including highways.
- Approved in February 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided approximately \$651.8 million in stimulus funding for highway and bridge improvements and \$524.2 million for public transit improvements in New Jersey. This funding can serve as a down payment on needed road, highway, bridge and transit improvements, but it is not sufficient to allow the state to proceed with numerous projects needed to modernize its surface transportation system.

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Current Road and Bridge Conditions, Travel Trends and Traffic Congestion

- Seventy-seven percent of New Jersey's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. Driving on roads in need of repair costs New Jersey motorists \$3.5 billion a year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs – \$601 per motorist.
- Thirty-five percent of New Jersey's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.
- Sixty-four percent of New Jersey's major urban highways are congested. Traffic congestion costs American motorists \$78.2 billion a year in wasted time and fuel costs. Americans spend 4.2 billion hours a year stuck in traffic.
- Americans rely almost exclusively on motor vehicles for mobility. Travel in private vehicles accounts for 88 percent of all person miles of travel. Air travel accounts for eight percent of all person miles of travel, while transit (including buses and trains) accounts for one percent.
- Vehicle travel on New Jersey's highways increased by 25 percent from 1990 to 2008. New Jersey's population grew by 13 percent from 1990 to 2008.
- Vehicle travel on America's highways increased by 39 percent from 1990 to 2008, while new road mileage increased by only four percent. The nation's population grew by 23 percent from 1990 to 2008.

Roadway Improvements Can Save Lives and Reduce Traffic Crashes

- Roadway conditions are a significant factor in approximately one-third of traffic fatalities. There were 590 traffic fatalities in 2008 in New Jersey. A total of 3,555 people died on New Jersey's highways from 2004 through 2008.
- New Jersey's traffic fatality rate of 0.80 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel is lower than the national average of 1.25.
- Motor vehicle crashes cost New Jersey \$9.3 billion per year, \$1,110 for each resident, in medical costs, lost productivity, travel delays, workplace costs, insurance costs and legal costs.
- Where appropriate, highway improvements such as removing or shielding obstacles, adding or improving medians, widening lanes and shoulders, upgrading roads from two lanes to four lanes, and improving road markings and traffic signals can reduce traffic fatalities and accidents and improve traffic flow to help relieve congestion.
- According to a study conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, \$100 million spent on highway safety improvements will save 145 lives over a 10-year period.

Data from the U.S Census, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Texas Transportation Institute was compiled and analyzed by TRIP, a nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C. Information is the latest available.

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