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Reports find roads and bridges crumbling nationwide, including in Utah

By [Jed Boal](#), Deseret News



New reports find only 38 percent of the pavement nationwide is in good condition. In Utah only 28 percent of pavement is good, while 61 percent is classified as fair.

Marc Weaver, Deseret News

SALT LAKE CITY — Two new reports show many roads and bridges nationwide are in disrepair.

USA Today and transportation research group TRIP analyzed road data from the Federal Highway Administration. When it comes to road conditions, the [analysis](#) found only 38 percent of the pavement nationwide is in good condition.

In Utah, only 28 percent of the pavement is good, while 61 percent is classified as fair, and 11 percent is classified as poor — ranking Utah 14th.

"We wish every road out there was in top shape. That's what the public deserves and expects, but there are a lot more challenges that face our state," Utah Department of Transportation spokesman Adan Carrillo said.

The [American Society of Civil Engineers](#) puts 25 percent of Utah's roads in poor or mediocre condition. UDOT said it has to balance the demand for new roads, like Mountain View Corridor and the expansion of I-15, with maintenance.

"We try to prioritize our road needs and put those funds where they're needed the most," Carrillo said.

The American Society of Civil Engineers found driving on roads in need of repair costs Utah motorists \$332 million a year in vehicle and operation costs. That's \$197 per motorist.

The USA Today/TRIP report found Utah has 126 bridges listed as "structurally deficient." That number is 4.3 percent of Utah's 2,947 bridges.

"We would not at any point in time allow a bridge or structure to remain open if we feel it is unsafe," Carrillo said. "Just because it is structurally deficient does not necessarily mean that it's unsafe. It may just be old and not up to current standards."

UDOT has a five- to 10-year plan to replace structurally deficient bridges. "We are constantly replacing bridges every year," Carrillo said.

A bridge leading Redwood Road to I-215 southbound was not classified as structurally deficient, but it is structurally obsolete. It's one of 343 bridges in Utah that doesn't meet standards for design and safety today, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers. It's not on the list to be changed quickly, but it will be replaced.

Federal funding pays for many repairs across the country. In Utah, many road projects are state-funded, which gives Utah more flexibility with the projects. UDOT pays for all of it with our 24.5-cent-per-gallon gas tax, which has not gone up in 15 years.