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NEW REPORT IDENTIFIES MAINE'S TOP 50 TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES AND NEEDED FIXES, INCLUDING DETERIORATED AND CONGESTED ROADWAYS, DEFICIENT BRIDGES AND NEEDED SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Portland, Maine – Deficient roads, highways and bridges in Maine are posing mounting challenges to the state's residents, visitors and businesses and addressing these challenges will require numerous projects to reconstruct highways, repair and replace bridges improve safety features and improve access on the state's transportation system. This is according to a new report released today by [TRIP](http://tripnet.org), a Washington, DC based national transportation research organization.

The report, "[*Maine's Top 50 Transportation Challenges and the Improvements Needed to Address Them*](#)," identifies and ranks the state's top 50 transportation challenges. Those transportation challenges include 12 sections of major roads or highways that need significant repairs or reconstruction; 19 major bridges in the state that have significant deficiencies and need to be rebuilt or reconstructed; an expansion of a marine terminal; and 18 sections of the state's transportation system that need improvements to address multiple challenges by improving safety, increasing access or improving road or bridge conditions. The report also offers solutions for fixing each of the transportation challenges.

The top transportation challenges in the state, as identified by the TRIP report, are as follows. Additional details for all 50 transportation challenges can be found in the report's [Appendix](#).

- 1. Needed Reconstruction of a portion of Route 3 in Bar Harbor.** Addressing this challenge will require reconstructing 4.8 miles of Route 3 in Bar Harbor from approximately one half-mile west of Sand Point Road to Route 233. Estimated cost is \$14 million. Route 3, the Acadia All-American Road, is perhaps the most significant highway in Maine for the tourism industry, providing access to Acadia National Park and over 1,000 beds for lodging. It carries approximately 10,317 vehicles per day. The current design and construction of the road lead to constant cracking at the margins. Safety will be greatly improved with better road geometrics, improved access and improved facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. This completes Route 3 improvement projects from the head of the island near Trenton to Bar Harbor.
- 2. Needed Replacement of Union Street Bridge in Bangor.** Addressing this challenge will require replacing the Union Street Bridge over I-95 in Bangor. Estimated cost is \$8.7 million. This is a critical bridge over I-95 on Union Street (Route 222), providing access to Bangor International Airport and the University of Maine at Bangor.
- 3. Needed Reconstruction of a portion of Route 302 in Portland area.** Addressing this challenge will require reconstructing Route 302 from Stack Em Inn Road and extending west 5.19 miles. Estimated cost is \$7.4 million. Route 302 is the major highway from Portland to Fryeburg, Maine and Conway, New Hampshire. It is a major route for commerce, supplying raw products and finished goods to market, as well as a significant commuter route for the labor force in the Greater Portland labor market. This route also serves the tourist rich areas of Fryeburg, Maine and Conway, New Hampshire. There are no practicable alternative routes without adding substantial time and cost.

4. **Needed Replacement of Pine Point Crossing Bridge in Scarborough.** Addressing this challenge will require replacing the Pine Point Crossing Bridge over the Pan Am Railroad. Estimated cost is \$3.3 million. This bridge, located on Pine Point Road (Route 9), provides primary access to the Coastal Beaches surrounding the Cumberland-York County boundary. The bridge carries an important highway supporting tourism economy. Loss of the bridge will have negative economic impact especially to businesses along this section of Route 9. There are no practicable alternative routes without adding substantial time and cost.
5. **Needed Replacement of Bar Mills Bridge from Buxton to Hollis.** Addressing this challenge will require replacing the deteriorated Bar Mills Bridge over the Saco River at the Buxton – Hollis town line. Estimated cost is \$8.3 million. The replacement of this bridge will improve safety and access and provide a more direct connection from Buxton to Hollis.
6. **Needed Capacity Expansion of the International Marine Terminal (IMT).** Addressing this challenge will require property acquisition to increase the capacity of the terminal, providing direct rail access to the terminal, and other infrastructure improvements. Estimated cost is \$9 million. The International Marine Terminal (IMT) in Portland was selected by the Icelandic Steamship Company, Eimskip, to serve as their North American logistical hub, and only port of call in the US. They have been carrying freight to and from Portland since March 2013. Maine businesses will benefit from competitive access to important markets in Eastern Canada, Scandinavia and Northern Europe.
7. **Needed Replacement of Durham Bridge between Durham and Lisbon.** Addressing this challenge will require replacing the Durham Bridge (Route 9) over the Androscoggin River. Estimated cost is \$6.8 million. This is an essential bridge over the Androscoggin River. Route 9 provides a major commuter route through high-population regions, from southern and western Kennebec through the rural areas of Cumberland County west of I-295. Route 9 is important as a commuter route for work force from rural areas to the service centers communities along its length from Gardiner to Portland. There are no practicable alternative routes without adding substantial time and cost.
8. **Needed Reconstruction of a portion of River Road in Westbrook and Windham.** Addressing this challenge will require reconstructing three miles of River Road from Westbrook town line to 0.17 miles south of the intersection of Chute and Depot Road. Estimated cost is \$4.8 million. River Road, an important commuter route, holds significant regional importance as a “bypass” alternative to congestion on Route 302 between Portland and Windham. It is an important route for goods and services that support regional businesses. Alternative routes are available, but with increased travel times and cost.
9. **Needed Reconstruction of a portion of Route 2 in Old Town and Milford.** Addressing this challenge will require reconstructing 0.75 miles of Route 2 from Bradley Road to 0.29 miles north of Ferry Road. Estimated cost is \$3.5 million. Route 2 provides a major non-interstate link from Houlton to Bangor and is a critical link from the forests of the region to the lumber and paper mills of the area, including those in Old Town, Bucksport and Lincoln.
10. **Needed Construction of the Approach to the International Bridge at Fort Kent.** Addressing this challenge will require constructing the approach associated with replacing the International Bridge on Route 1 in Aroostook. Estimated cost is \$5.2 million. Route One connects the border crossings at Ft Kent, Madawaska, and Van Buren. This corridor, which carries approximately 8,100 vehicles per day, is the principal highway link to Route 11, Route 161, and to I-95 in Smyrna and Houlton. It is the transportation backbone of the natural resource based economy, serving as the gateway to the vast undeveloped forest of the “Maine Woods” and supplying raw products to paper and lumber mills throughout northern Maine. Route One also serves as a critical corridor for the logging, agricultural, winter sport and tourism industries. It also provides improved access to Canadian seaports.

TRIP ranked Maine’s top transportation challenges by giving each segment or facility an overall score, based on a scale that included points for the following categories: current volume of daily travel or ridership; the challenge posed to the public based on the significance of the problem or deficiency; the importance of the route or facility to regional, interstate or international travel patterns; the importance of the route or facility to the regional economy; and, the cost to repair the deficiency.

“Transportation is truly the backbone of Maine’s economy,” said Dana Connors, president of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. “It supports our traditional, natural resources-based industries related to farming,

forestry and manufacturing, but it is key to continuing the growth and expansion of tourism, our largest industry.” Connors is chair of the Keep Maine Moving Coalition, which supports Question #3, the transportation bond on the state ballot. “Question #3 would provide over \$250 million for all modes of transportation, including the matching funds. It is critical to moving Maine forward, and we hope Maine voters will again support the transportation bond.” Enhancing critical segments of Maine’s transportation system will boost the state’s economy in the short-term by creating jobs in construction and related fields. In the long term these improvements will enhance economic competitiveness and improve the quality of life for the state’s residents and visitors by reducing travel delays and transportation costs, improving access and mobility, improving safety, and stimulating sustained job growth. Sustaining Maine’s long-term economic growth and maintaining the state’s high quality of life will require increased investment in expanding the capacity of the state’s transportation system, which will enhance business productivity and support short- and long-term job creation in the state.

“Investing in Maine’s transportation system and eliminating these challenges by improving the condition and efficiency of the state’s roads, highways and bridges will be an effective step in growing the state’s economy, enhancing quality of life and making Maine an attractive place to live, work and visit,” said Will Wilkins, executive director of TRIP.