The Nation’s Worst Highways are in California — and Oklahoma?

Report finds highways in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose and San Diego are the most deteriorated

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The traffic in Los Angeles is terrible, and its roads aren’t much better. According to a new report by transportation research group TRIP, the city has the highest percentage of bad highways in the country, with almost two-thirds of the Interstates and freeways in the L.A. area in poor condition.

According to the national survey, the four cities with the most deteriorated highways are all in California. Sixty percent of the roadways in San Francisco are in poor shape, along with 56% of urban roads in San Jose and 55% of highways in San Diego. While the state may not suffer from pavement-cracking cold, longstanding budget shortfalls have left the road maintenance budget underfunded.

But when calculating consumer costs related to vehicle deterioration and depreciation, two Oklahoma cities crack the top five – Tulsa and Oklahoma City. According to TRIP, poor roads cost Tulsa residents $784 a year and Oklahoma City residents $782 in additional wear and fuel costs.

The report cites a lack of funding across federal and state levels as a factor for much of the nation’s poor urban roads. In California, a state infamous for traffic horror stories, money for road maintenance has lagged as the state has struggled to balance its budget. In Oklahoma, many roads and bridges have been in a state of disrepair for decades, also due largely to a lack of funding. The Federal Highway Administration says that 36% of Oklahoma’s roadway pavement is deteriorating and that 23% of its bridges are structurally deficient.

According to a 2010 U.S. Department of Transportation report, funding for highway improvements would need to rise 21% just to maintain current conditions and 91% to make significant improvements.

Nationwide, 27% of the country’s urban roadways have “pavements that are in substandard condition and provide an unacceptably rough ride to motorists,” according to the report, costing drivers $377 each year for increased maintenance, fuel and tire repair.