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DRIVING ON DEFICIENT ROADS COSTS EACH ROCHESTER DRIVER MORE THAN \$800 PER YEAR; BOOST IN STATE AND FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING NEEDED TO MODERNIZE ROADS AND BRIDGES TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC SAFETY AND PROVIDE CONGESTION RELIEF

Rochester, New York – The average Rochester driver loses \$818 each year as a result of driving on roads that lack some desirable safety features, have poor pavement conditions or have inadequate capacity to meet travel demands. In total, New York State motorists lose \$16.4 billion each year due to traffic crashes, additional vehicle operating costs and congestion-related delays, according to a new report released today by TRIP, a Washington, DC based national transportation organization.

The report, *“Future Mobility in New York: Meeting the State’s Need for Safe and Efficient Mobility,”* finds that more than one-third of major roads in the Rochester area are deteriorated. Nineteen percent of major roads in the area are rated in poor condition, and an additional 15 percent are rated in mediocre condition. In addition to deteriorated road conditions, 27 percent of Rochester area bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Twenty-four percent of Rochester’s urban highways are considered congested, costing area drivers 10 hours each year due to congestion-related delays. Thirty-two people were killed in 2008 on Rochester area roads, giving the region a traffic fatality rate of 4.4 fatalities per 100,000 population.

“In order to improve the state’s transportation system, ease the burden on drivers, and kick start New York’s economy, transportation investment must be a priority at the state and federal level,” said Will Wilkins, executive director of TRIP. “Without adequate investment, many critically needed transportation projects will remain stranded on the drawing board.”

The TRIP report finds that New York State faces a transportation funding shortfall of approximately \$87 billion from 2010 to 2030. The challenge of meeting this transportation funding shortfall will be exacerbated by growing debt repayments for funds borrowed to fund road, highway and bridge repairs in the state. Nearly half (49 percent) of the revenue going into the New York State Highway and Bridge Dedicated Trust Fund is currently being used to pay off

debt. By 2013, debt service is expected to consume 72 percent of the State Highway and Bridge Dedicated Trust Fund's incoming revenues.

State transportation funds are also being diverted away from making needed road and bridge improvements. From state fiscal years 1993-1994 to 2008-2009, 35 percent of disbursements from the New York State Highway and Bridge Dedicated Trust Fund were spent on capital construction projects – the funds used to repair and improve the state's roads and bridges. By 2013, the share of the New York State Highway and Bridge Dedicated Trust Fund going to capital construction projects is expected to decline to 21 percent.

“At no time in recent memory has attention to our infrastructure been of greater importance,” said Ken Warner, executive director of UNICON (Unions and Businesses United in Construction). “Not only is it vital to maintain the safety of our highway system, we must address the issue of recovery from a recession without job growth. Improving our transportation infrastructure can create thousands of jobs at a time when they are desperately needed.”

A 2007 analysis by the Federal Highway Administration found that every \$1 billion invested in highway construction would support approximately 27,800 jobs, including approximately 9,500 in the construction sector, approximately 4,300 jobs in industries supporting the construction sector, and approximately 14,000 other jobs induced in non-construction related sectors of the economy.

“A safe and reliable system of highways and bridges is vital to Upstate New York's economy,” said Sandy Parker, president and CEO of the Rochester Business Alliance. “We depend on those roadways to carry our employees to and from work, to truck the hundreds of billions in dollars of goods that our businesses buy and sell and to keep our tourism industry vibrant. For our economy to grow, we need to ensure that our region has a quality transportation system that includes efficient, well-maintained bridges and roads.”