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**For immediate release
Friday, May 8, 2009**

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**CALIFORNIA LEADS NATION IN POOR ROADS;
AVERAGE COST TO MOTORISTS IS \$590 A YEAR**

**TRANSPORTATION CALIFORNIA SAYS LONG-TERM FUNDING NEEDED TO PRESERVE
HIGHWAY SYSTEM**

Washington, DC- May 8, 2009 – California’s major urban roadways are the roughest in the nation, costing the average state driver at least \$590 annually in extra vehicle operating costs. According to a report released today by TRIP and the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 35 percent of major urban roads in California are in poor condition. More than 50 percent of pavements are rated poor in seven California cities with 250,000 or more people.

Los Angeles, San Jose and San Francisco-Oakland top the list of the 20 urban areas across the country with the highest percentage of bad roads. Six other metro areas make the dubious list of localities with the poor roads: Concord, San Diego, Palm Springs, Riverside-San Bernardino, Sacramento and Mission Viejo.

More than two-thirds of all major California roads are rated poor to mediocre, costing drivers in 11 cities significantly more than the state average – higher than \$700 annually in Los Angeles, San Jose and San Francisco-Oakland.

“The whole system is cracking,” says Mark Watts, executive director of Transportation California. “Almost half of the urban areas with the worst road conditions are found in California. Despite our

successes in increasing transportation infrastructure investment over the past few years, we are not even close to digging ourselves out of the hole that years of neglect created.”

“With regard to road quality, our safety and maintenance program, which is funded by fuel excise levies, has been hamstrung by the erosion of both the gas tax revenue stream and buying power. As a result, the motoring public is forced to foot the bill for crummy road conditions. An increase in the gas tax would more than pay for itself in reducing out-of-pocket expenses for motorists.”

The report, “Rough Road Ahead: Fix Them Now or Pay for it Later,” evaluated pavement conditions on major urban roadways in the nation’s largest urban areas and calculated the extra vehicle operating cost (VOC) to motorists of driving on roads in poor condition. Extra vehicle operating costs include accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. The report found that the continued increase in traffic is putting significant wear and tear on roads at a time when transportation funding is inadequate to keep pace with the rate of roadway deterioration.

The report found that the twenty large urban regions (500,000+ population), with the greatest share of major roads and highways with pavements in poor condition are: **Los Angeles, 64%; San Jose, 61%; San Francisco-Oakland, 61%;** Honolulu, 61%; **Concord, CA, 54%;** New York – Newark, 54%; **San Diego, 53%;** New Orleans, 49%; Tulsa, 47%; **Palm Springs – Indio, CA, 47%; Riverside-San Bernardino, 44%;** Baltimore, 44%; **Sacramento, 44%;** Omaha, 41%; Oklahoma City, 41%; San Antonio, 38%; **Mission Viejo, CA, 37%;** Albuquerque, 36%; Philadelphia, 36%; and Detroit, 36%.

The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 – the federal stimulus program – will provide a total of \$27 billion for highway projects nationwide (\$2.6 billion in California). “But our highway transportation system is still in dire need of additional funding for maintenance, preservation, expansion and reconstruction,” Watts noted.

The current federal transportation program expires on September 30. Congress will need to authorize a new federal surface transportation program or extend the current program to allow federal highway dollars to continue to be provided to the states.

“The public is paying for these poor road conditions twice,” Watts said, “first through additional vehicle costs and then in higher road repair and construction costs.” The report documents that every dollar spent maintaining a good road precludes spending \$6 to \$14 to rebuild one that has deteriorated.

“We need to commit to keeping our good roads good and improving the overall quality of California’s surface transportation,” Watts said.

The Cost of Driving on Poor Roads in California’s 20 Largest Urban Areas

		Poor Percent	Mediocre Percent	Fair Percent	Good Percent	Added vehicle operating costs per motorist
Los Angeles	+	64%	28%	5%	3%	\$ 746
San Jose	+	61%	29%	8%	2%	732
San Francisco-Oakland	+	61%	22%	4%	13%	705
Santa Rosa	-	52%	39%	8%	1%	684
San Diego	+	53%	31%	6%	10%	664
Concord	+	54%	19%	17%	9%	656
Antioch	-	58%	13%	9%	21%	652
Hemet	-	44%	53%	1%	2%	650
Riverside-San Bernardino	+	44%	44%	7%	4%	632
Sacramento	+	44%	44%	4%	8%	622
Palm Springs-Indio	+	47%	28%	10%	15%	608
Stockton	-	42%	34%	8%	16%	580
Mission Viejo	+	37%	47%	5%	11%	571
Temecula-Murrieta	-	35%	53%	7%	5%	571
Oxnard-Ventura	-	36%	45%	11%	8%	560
Victorville-Hesperia	-	37%	36%	15%	11%	552
Modesto	-	34%	39%	17%	10%	538
Fresno	+	28%	35%	14%	23%	461
Lancaster-Palmdale	+	13%	40%	24%	23%	350
Bakersfield	+	5%	38%	33%	23%	280
Statewide Average		35%	31%	16%	18%	590
National Average						335

+ Urban Areas 500,000+ population

- Urban Areas 250,000 to 499,000 population

Source: TRIP analysis of Federal Highway Administration data