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**Report available at: [www.tripnet.org](http://www.tripnet.org)**

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**NEARLY HALF OF NEW ORLEANS' MAJOR ROADS IN POOR CONDITION,  
COSTING EACH DRIVER MORE THAN \$600 ANNUALLY**

**URBAN PAVEMENT CONDITIONS LIKELY TO WORSEN AS TRAFFIC VOLUMES  
RISE WHILE HIGHWAY REVENUE FALLS SHORT; GREATER INVESTMENT  
NEEDED TO ENSURE SMOOTHER RIDES AND LONGER-LASTING ROADS**

**Washington, DC- May 8, 2009** – New Orleans' major urban roadways are the eighth roughest in the nation, costing area drivers \$622 each year in extra vehicle operating costs. According to a new report released today by TRIP and the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 49 percent of major urban roads in New Orleans are in poor condition, and an additional 19 percent are in mediocre condition.

The TRIP / AASHTO report, entitled "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 urban traffic is putting significant wear and tear on urban roads at a time when transportation funding is inadequate to keep pace with the rate of deterioration on the roads. Vehicle travel in Louisiana increased by 20 percent from 1990 to 2007 and is anticipated to increase by another 20 percent by 2020.

Drivers in the Baton Rouge metro area, where 37 percent of major roads are in poor condition, lose \$534 each year as a result of driving in roads in need of repair. In Shreveport, 35 percent of major roads are in poor condition, costing the average driver \$552 annually.

"Our nation has invested \$1.75 trillion in our public highway system over the past 50 years," said John Horsley, AASHTO Executive Director. "We hope Congress will make it possible for the federal government to sustain its share of the increased investment needed to keep America's roads in good condition. If not, it will cost the American people billions more later."

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 federal stimulus program is providing a helpful down payment towards repairing some of the nation’s rough roads,” said Frank Moretti, TRIP’s Director of Policy and Research. “But it will take a significant long-term boost in investment by all levels of government to provide Americans with a smooth ride.”

While the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 will provide a total of \$27 billion for highway projects (\$430 million in Louisiana), the nation’s highway transportation system will still be in dire need of additional funding for maintenance, preservation, expansion and reconstruction. The current federal transportation program expires on September 30, 2009, requiring Congress 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.

"Some day our elected officials will understand that our investment in this nation’s infrastructure system is an investment in America. While the construction industry is grateful for the funds from the Stimulus Bill, we're disappointed that there was not more. The construction industry can put folks to work immediately, but with less than 3% of the \$780 billion Stimulus Bill going to construction....well as a country, as a state and as an industry, we can do more. Case in point is the TRIP study," said Ken Naquin, CEO of the Louisiana Associated General Contractors.