



1726 M St., NW, #401/ Washington, DC 20036/P: 202.466.6706 / F: 202.785.4722 / www.tripnet.org / trip@tripnet.org

For immediate release

Friday, May 8, 2009

Report available at: www.tripnet.org

Contact: Frank Moretti 202-262-0714

Carolyn Bonifas 202-466-6706

Bobby Stem 405-843-5661

Jennifer Eve 405-620.6379

MAJOR ROADS IN OKLAHOMA CITY AND TULSA AMONG ROUGHEST IN THE NATION, COSTING AREA DRIVERS \$600 - \$700 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 –Major urban roadways in Oklahoma City and Tulsa are among the roughest in the nation, costing area drivers in the form of accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. According to a new report released today by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and TRIP, drivers in the Tulsa metro area, where 47 percent of major roads are in poor condition, lose \$703 each year as a result of driving in roads in need of repair. In Oklahoma City, 41 percent of major roads are in poor condition, costing the average driver \$631 annually. Among large urban areas, Tulsa has the ninth highest percentage of poor roads in the nation, while Oklahoma City ranks fifteenth.

The AASHTO/TRIP 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. 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 Oklahoma increased by 44 percent from 1990 to 2007 and is anticipated to increase by another 40 percent by 2020.

“We are obviously taking great steps to fix and maintain Oklahoma’s roads and bridges, but as you can see by the recent study, we have much more to do,” said Bobby Stem, Executive Director for the Association of Oklahoma General Contractors. “The Stimulus money was a wonderful contribution but long term financing of our state’s infrastructure is needed in order to continue to be the best we can be.”

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%.

“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.”

While the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 will provide a total of \$27 billion for highway projects (\$465 million in Oklahoma), 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.

“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.”