

2014 California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment Report

Talking Points

Main points

- **The local roads we all rely on are literally crumbling beneath our feet ... and the tires of our cars, trucks and bicycles. The conditions are getting so bad that if Californians don't commit to prioritizing funding to fix them, we could be facing a catastrophe.**
- To put a number on it, the average pavement condition of California's streets and roads is just 66 out of 100 — which is considered at risk.
- In just six years, the funding shortfall to repair and maintain our roads has grown from \$71.4 to \$77.3 billion.
- To put it in another context, in a decade, 25% of roads will be in "failed" condition.
- Delaying necessary work not only puts the public and our economy at risk, it inevitably leads to increased costs in the future.
- State and federal funding to fix and maintain local roads has been woefully inadequate for years.
- From the moment we open our front door to drive to work, bike to school, or walk to the bus stop, people are dependent on safe, reliable local streets and roads.

Solutions

- **Everyone who benefits from local streets and roads — including personal and commercial vehicles, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians — should bear the cost of restoring them.**
- Californians must work together to figure out how to fund our local streets and roads, and push the state and federal governments to establish sustainable long-term transportation revenues.
- And once we have new revenues, we must dedicate a significant portion of them towards the preservation of our existing road network. Maintenance costs will naturally be reduced after the system is in a state of good repair.
- By investing in our local road system, we are investing in the safety and wellbeing of all Californians and ensuring the reliability of one of the foundations of our economy.

Threat

- The 2014 Needs Assessment shows pavement conditions continuing to deteriorate.
- Without more money to fix our roads, pavement conditions will continue to deteriorate and cost taxpayers nearly twice as much down the line.
- Local streets and roads hold the state's entire transportation network together.

- We must find new sources of funding to invest in our infrastructure, or face the economic consequences of falling behind.

Financial Cost

- **Roads and bridges are like cars or houses. If you don't take care of them with regular maintenance and repairs, you'll either have to spend more money to fix larger problems, or buy a new one. Worse yet, deferred house or car maintenance could literally put you, your family or others a grave risk.**
- Californians have a choice: We can either pay to fix and maintain our streets and roads today, or pay much more in the future to replace them.
- To spend the taxpayer's money cost-effectively, it just makes sense to preserve and maintain our roads and bridges in good condition than to let them deteriorate and then pay more to fix them.
- In fact, more than double the current funding level is needed just to maintain current pavement conditions — which are below standards on the streets and roads in 54 of 58 California counties.
- **To put our investment in context: Californians on average pay \$540 for internet, \$780 for their coffee habit, \$852 for a cell phone, and an incredible \$1,032 for cable every year. By contrast, motorists only pay \$368 in taxes used to maintain the roadways necessary for everyday life.**

Public Safety

- **It's a matter of public safety. Police, fire and emergency medical services all need safe, reliable roads to react quickly to calls. A few minutes delay can be a matter of life and death.**
- Reliable local streets and roads increase the safety and livability of our communities — this is important whether you're young or old, on foot or in a car, riding a bicycle, using a wheelchair or taking the bus.
- Repairs to local roadways are more than just fixing potholes; they include improvements for sidewalks, storm water control, gutters, curb ramps, traffic signs and medians, all of which make our roads safer.

Job Creation

- Modernizing local streets and roads will create well-paying construction jobs and boost local economies.
- California business relies on local streets and roads to connect with clients, vendors and customers. Investing in road infrastructure is paramount to our continued economic recovery.

- The local street and road system is critical to California's economy — the 8th largest in the world. The "last mile" for the movement of goods from rail, airports and seaports occurs on the local system. A functioning well maintained local network promotes economic sustainability and vitality.

Environment

- California is a leader in the fight against global warming. Cities and counties are doing their part to build livable communities which provide multi-modal transportation options to walk, bike, and take transit to move around communities. This reduces stress on our local roads, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and promotes public health benefits of an active lifestyle.
- **Modernizing local streets and roads will reduce drive time and traffic congestion, improve bicycle safety, and make walking more appealing — all of which leads to reduced vehicle emissions.**
- Cars sustain less damage and use less fuel on well-maintained streets.
- Restoring roads before they fail will reduce construction time and that means less air pollution from heavy equipment and less water pollution from site run-off.