

# A PRESCRIPTION FOR OUR TRANSPORTATION ILLS

Yes, Americans can click off the television, radio and Internet, or put the newspaper and magazine down when they feel the twinge of an approaching headache from all the depressing news they've recently seen, heard or read about, but what does a driver or commuter do in 2009?

Because it's not advised to take your hands off the steering wheel to take two aspirins during rush hour, the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and national transportation research group The Road Information Program (TRIP) came out with a prescription of sorts to cure the nation's top five transportation headaches.

AASHTO and TRIP listed the leading symptoms for headaches caused by the nation's transportation system, as being:

- Crumbling roads and bridges
- Growing traffic jams
- Crowded transit systems and rail cars
- Unacceptably high rate of traffic crashes and fatalities

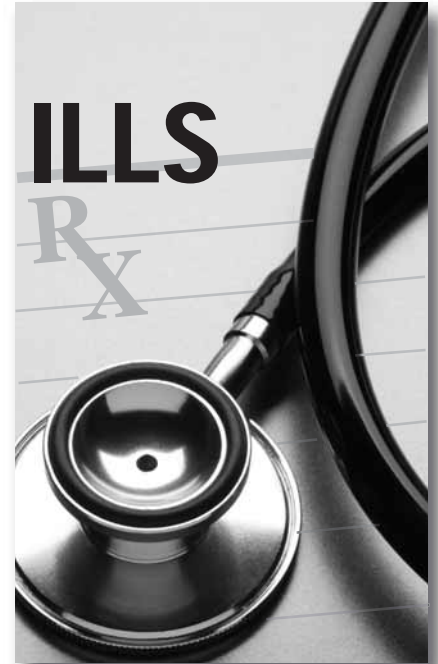
- Insufficient funding

Here's a look at the AASHTO/TRIP list of five transportation headaches - and their "plop, plop, fizz, fizz" remedies:

**Headache 1:  
Aging/deteriorating  
roads, bridges &  
transit systems**

Nationally, 25 percent of major urban roadways are in poor condition; 25 percent of bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete; and roughly 50 percent of transit buses and rail cars have exceeded their service life - or will within six years. In Ohio, 25 percent of the state's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition and one in every four bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

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## A Formula that Works:

**CONSTRUCTION + FUNDING = ECONOMIC STIMULUS**

Nearly two months to the day before the signing of the federal stimulus package by President Obama, the Association General Contractors of America (AGC) was paving the way with reasons why transportation infrastructure investments are a win-win-win.

AGC came to Ohio in mid-December to announce state-by-state data on the economic benefits that could be generated through "infrastructure stimulus investments." Sadly, Columbus was chosen as the venue for the national announcement as Ohio is among the states with the largest decrease in

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**Headache Remedy 1: Begin work on “ready-to-go” projects** - Nationally, once funding is available, state transportation departments have nearly 5,300 highway/bridge projects worth \$64 billion that can be under contract within six months, and nearly 750 transit projects worth \$12.2 billion ready to go within 90 days.



**Headache 2: Congestion** - Nationally, roads, bridges and transit systems are increasingly overburdened and congested, leading to longer rush hours, costly disruptions in freight movement and overcrowded buses and rail cars. According to the Texas Transportation Institute, **congestion cost motorists in Ohio’s six major cities \$1.37 billion in 2005 – an increase of \$24 million since 2000.**

**Headache Remedy 2: Boost transportation funding to stimulate economic growth in the short, medium and long term** - Funding transportation improvements support jobs, which eases the high unemployment rate – particularly in the hard-hit construction sector. Every \$1 billion invested in highway construction would support approximately 27,800 jobs, both in the construction and non-construction-related sectors of the economy. **According to the Associated General Contractors of America, Ohio has 35,500 fewer people working in construction since 2000.**

**Headache 3: Traffic fatalities & injuries** - Though it was the lowest number of fatalities in nearly 50 years, more than 41,000 people died on the nation’s roads in 2007. **In Ohio, according to the Ohio Department of Public Safety, there were 819**

**transportation-related fatalities in 2007.** These fatality rates can be lowered with needed roadway safety improvements.

**Headache Remedy 3: Surface transportation improvements outweigh costs** - The dollar-invest-to-benefits ratio is \$1/\$5.69 for the nation’s highway system, and \$1/\$6 for the public transit system. Surface transportation improvements for highway users come in the form of **economic benefits, reduced delays, improved safety, reduced emissions and lower vehicle operating/maintenance costs.** For public transit users, the benefits from system improvements are savings in both parking and **travel time; avoided job loss, welfare payments, vehicle crashes, congestion and pollution; increased central city labor opportunities and mobility for people without access to private vehicles; and improved educational opportunities.**

**Headache 4: Demand is stressing the system** - Rising population levels, travel and economic activity are resulting in additional wear and tear on the nation’s roads, bridges and public transit systems. As a result of the nation’s population increasing 23 percent over the past 20 years, vehicle travel has increased 41 percent since 1990, and transit travel is up 41 percent since 1995. **In 2004, Ohio’s road system experienced nearly 11 billion more miles of use than it did in 1995.**

**Headache Remedy 4: Continue the use of innovative construction and technology** - Additional use by transportation agencies and the private sector in innovative construction and advanced technology will lead to highway and bridge improvements that last longer; take less time to construct/maintain; and are environmentally savvy.

**Headache 5: Everyone’s costs are rising** - Nationally, drivers are losing \$249 billion annually because of congested, deficient or unsafe roads; that, coupled with the 55-percent increase in materials for road, highway and bridge construction since 2004, is further stretching already thin, and under-funded, transportation budgets at the federal, state and local levels. In 2008, the **Ohio Department of Transportation estimated it had \$1.07 billion in under-funded pavement and bridge preservation projects.**

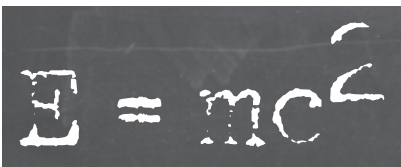
**Headache Remedy 5: Make a down-payment on the nation's immediate transportation needs and long-term improvements** - According to AASHTO/TRIP, investment in transportation infrastructure can play a significant role in hastening the nation's economic recovery. Also, crafting a long-range federal surface transportation reauthorization program before it expires Sept. 30, 2009, provides an opportunity to set

the nation on a course to achieving a safe, reliable, and well-maintained system of roads, highways, bridges and public transit.

How does AASHTO and TRIP spell relief for the nation's surface transportation system?  
A-D-D-I-T-I-O-N-A-L F-U-N-D-I-N-G

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ECONOMIC STIMULUS ... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



construction employment; AGC Chief Executive Officer Stephen Sandherr reported that 35,500 (or 14.1 percent)

fewer people in Ohio are working in construction than they were in 2000.

According to AGC Chief Economist Ken Simonson and George Mason University Professor Stephen Fuller, **here are reasons why investing in Ohio's transportation construction industry are a "win" for the entire state:**

**Win** – An additional \$1 billion in non-residential construction spending would generate:

- About \$2.5 billion to Ohio's Gross Domestic Product
- \$777 million in personal earnings
- Create or sustain 23,000 jobs
  - Of those jobs, 7,800 would be on-site construction occupations; 3,700 would be in construction supply materials and services; and 11,500 would be in other areas of the state's economy that are supported through the spending of people involved in construction and supply materials and services

**Win-Win** – Additional money used toward non-residential construction means more money for the rest of Ohio's residents. Of the estimated \$20.8 billion spent in Ohio in 2007 for construction and maintenance of highways, water systems, educational and health facilities and energy systems:

- \$52.6 billion was contributed to Ohio's GDP – a 1:2.5+ costs-to-benefits ratio

- \$16.2 billion in additional personal earnings for Ohio residents working in the state was added to the economy through direct construction spending

**Win-Win-Win** – Not to mention, an investment in Ohio's transportation infrastructure system means a better quality of life and stimulus for business growth through better and safer roads and bridges. According to The Road Information Program:

- \$8.4 trillion worth of commodities delivered annually in the U.S. is dependent on the road system
- Driving on roads in need of repair costs U.S. motorists \$333 per motorist each year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs
- Road congestion costs American motorists \$78.2 billion annually in wasted time and fuel costs
- Unsafe road conditions costs each U.S. resident \$819 annually in medical costs, lost productivity, travel delays and workplace, insurance and legal costs

**And not to sound long "Win"ded, AGC provided information on what a \$1 billion investment in non-residential construction means on the national level. Each \$1 billion invested in the aforementioned areas of non-residential construction creates or saves more than 28,500 jobs nationwide – which includes 14,300 jobs outside the construction and construction-related industries.**

"Investing in infrastructure will create jobs, will increase earnings and will stimulate economic growth," Sandherr said. "Just as importantly, these investments will give our economy a global competitive edge for decades to come."

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# AMERICANS GET TOGETHER TO SAY: 'FIX OUR INFRASTRUCTURE'



See, we **can** just all get along.

In this age of us versus them, lower class versus middle class versus upper class, and Democrats versus Republicans, recent polling results – not to mention recent election polls – show that **Americans agree on the topic of infrastructure improvements.**

In separate national surveys conducted between mid-December and as recently as mid-February, Americans aren't only voting to approve infrastructure improvement initiatives, as proven in last November's election, they're also willing to pay more – even in this economy.

How much more? Depending on the poll, **Americans would pay up to 1 percent more in taxes for improved infrastructure, while another survey shows commuters willing to pay \$22 a month if it decreases travel time.**

In the poll for Building America's Future, which examined the nation's views on infrastructure, priorities and willingness to pay for it, 94 percent of Americans are concerned about infrastructure. Of the 94 percent,

more than 80 percent are willing to put their money where their mouth is and would pay 1 percent more in taxes to improve America's infrastructure. With the U.S. Census Bureau listing the 2008 median household income at \$50,233, and Americans paying on average of 30.96 percent in annual taxes, a 1 percent tax increase would be approximately \$155 more annually for better infrastructure.

**Americans believe paying for infrastructure improvements now will make the difference between a more prosperous or more difficult future. According to a survey, more than four out of five Americans are willing to pay \$22 a month if it would reduce time spent in traffic.**



However, before Americans show officials the money to fund those infrastructure improvements, **they want accountability that the projects are completed on time and on budget, and they want to see how and where the money is being spent.**

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According to a survey conducted by HNTB Corp. in Kansas City, Mo., more than four out of five people believe “making sacrifices to pay for infrastructure improvements now, will make the difference between a more prosperous or a more difficult future for the next generation.” **The survey showed that the average American would be willing to pay \$22 a month (\$264/year) if it would cut down the**

## Election Results Show Support For Transportation Funding

According to a report compiled by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) following the November 2008 election, voters across the U.S. approved more than \$71 billion in additional transportation funding.

And it was by a comfortable margin. In measures asking voters to approve, extend or increase taxes and bonds, 75 percent of the 32 ballot items passed with an average vote of 63 percent.

In Ohio, five of eight transportation-related initiatives passed, which authorized a combined 7.9 mills in property tax renewals and replacements for transportation improvements. The successful initiatives in Berlin, Clarksfield, Grafton, Greenwich and Pittsfield townships passed with an average of 62 percent of the votes.

The value of transportation measures was up significantly in 2008 (\$71 billion) compared to the 2004 presidential election (\$28 billion).

According to ARTBA, “The election results in 2008 continue to demonstrate strong public support for state and local transportation ballot investment initiatives.”

**amount of time they spend in traffic by 20 percent.**

Other findings in the two surveys were that Americans believe energy facilities are the highest priority for infrastructure projects, followed by roads and highways, and clean water (Building America’s Future); and two out of three respondents believe freight and passenger traffic should be separated on the roads and rails (HNTB).

“There simply isn’t another issue with such widespread support across partisan lines and geographic boundaries,” said Frank Luntz of Luntz, Maslansky Strategic Research, which conducted the Building America’s Future poll. “The public already sees the need and is ready to lend a hand financially to make sure it gets done – but they want it done correctly. This is a major test for government. Accountability is absolutely essential.”

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## OCIA Services Can Help You

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# The Ohio Construction Information Association Membership Application

— **YES**, I want to be a part of informing Ohio's citizens about the benefits of restoring and improving our highways, streets, bridges, water & sewer systems!

**Please enroll us at the following level:**

- |                                     |                     |  |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 25 <sup>00</sup> | <input type="checkbox"/> Association       | \$200 <sup>00</sup> |
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