



LOUISIANA GOOD ROADS & TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION, INC.

GOOD ROADS ALERT

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Cost of Driving

AAA estimates the cost of driving a car is 56.6 cents per mile. Owners will pay \$8,487 this year or \$23.25 per day to own and operate their car. This is up 2.6 cents per mile from last year.

The cost of owning and operating a four-wheel drive SUV will be 73.9 cents per mile, which is up 5.5 cents per mile from last year. The cost for a minivan will be 58.8 cents per mile up 3.2 cents per mile from last year.

TRIP Reports On La Road Conditions

A TRIP (The Road Information Program) report found that a total of 44 percent of Louisiana's major state and locally maintained roads are in poor or mediocre condition. In the Baton Rouge area, a total of 60 percent of major roads are in poor or mediocre condition, while a total of 68 percent of major roads in the New Orleans are in poor or mediocre condition.

In addition, 13 percent of Louisiana bridges are structurally deficient, and 16 percent are functionally obsolete. Traffic congestion is a growing burden in Louisiana. According to the report, 43 percent of the state's major urban roads are congested during peak travel times.

Louisiana's traffic crashes claimed the lives of 4,782 people between 2004 and 2008. The state's traffic fatality rate of 2.02 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel, is the second highest in the nation. Louisiana's rural, non-Interstate roads have a fatality rate that is more than double that on all other roads in the state.

According to TRIP estimates, roadways lacking desirable safety features, have inadequate capacity or have poor pavement conditions, cost the average Baton Rouge area motorist \$1,052 annually and cost the average New Orleans area motorist \$1,254 annually.

To review the TRIP report, go to:

http://www.tripnet.org/Louisiana_Authorization_Report_042110.pdf

Driving Louisiana Forward – Current Legislative Action

Here are some Bills of interest from the current Legislative Session.

HB 369, Connick, authorizing the use of TTF funds to pay for CCCD ferry costs, was voluntarily deferred by the author. Regarding CCCD, don't count on the author giving up easily.

HB 1109, 1110, 1111, and 1112, LaFonta, which addresses moving funds out of the 8(G) fund, the "Rainy Day" Fund, and other constitutionally and statutorily dedicated funds, into the general fund in times of financial crisis for the state, were all deferred by the House Appropriations Committee.

However, Senate President Chaisson has scheduled SB 1, SB 2, SB 392, relative to transfers out of the Budget Stabilization Fund, as well as constitutionally and statutorily dedicated funds, in times of a state budget crisis. Also scheduled are his bills transferring monies out of the Millennium Trust and the Louisiana Fund.

HCR 115, Downs, the beginning of the master plan for moving forward with highway funding in the future, has been approved by the House Transportation Committee and now must go before the House Ways & Means Committee.

Louisiana Good Roads Goals and Objectives Committee Meets



Photo above shows the Louisiana Good Roads and Transportation Association Goals and Objectives Committee at their May Breakfast Meeting. Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at the Baton Rouge Country Club. Featured speakers are invited and various transportation issues are discussed. Ken Perret, LGRTA President is shown at the far end of the table on the right. To his left is Pete Newkirk, Baton Rouge Director of Public Works who attends the meetings to bring the group up to date on the projects and legislation in the Baton Rouge area.

Goodbye Fuel Tax?

According to Government Technology magazine, the President "has called on the U.S. to put one million electric vehicles (EVs) and plug-in hybrids on the road by 2015." The U.S. Department of Energy has reportedly put almost \$100 million in grant funds into this two-year study. The project will cover California, Arizona, Tennessee, Washington and Oregon. Some 11,000 vehicle charging stations will be built to service these vehicles. Nissan-North America has indicated that they will provide 4,700 new Nissan electric cars to consumers and fleet owners.

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In nearby Houston ten vehicles will operate and ten recharging stations will be built. There will be no charge for the electricity but drivers must buy a \$10 pass key. Drivers can find available stations via web enabled cell phones. Subscribers will receive a text message or e-mail when their vehicle is recharged.

The use of these vehicles reduces gasoline fuel consumption and with this, reduces the amount of fuel tax paid by drivers. Departments of Transportation on both the Federal and State levels are having to focus on the need to fill this financial void in the future as this type of vehicle becomes more popular.

You Must Use Standard Bid Form

Ken Naquin, Chief Executive Officer of Louisiana AGC, reports that LAGC is seeing more public bids challenged by other bidders than the low bidder, each and every day. Naquin says that although the creation and implementation of the standard bid form was supposed to make the public bid process easier. However, getting the design community and local governments to recognize the bid form and to limit what that a bidder is to submit with their bid has been a “nightmare”.

Naquin also points out that the Louisiana Supreme Court has ruled that if variations from the standard bid form are not challenged before bids are taken, they cannot be challenged after the bids are taken.

If you are a designer, a local public agency or consulting firm, and you want more information about this issue; call the LAGC office in Baton Rouge at (225) 344-0432.

Unlocking Gridlock – An AASHTO Report

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials has released a series of reports including Unlocking Gridlock. Some of the findings in the report include:

- America’s population is forecast to increase from 308 million today to more than 420 million by 2050.

“Today, drivers with a 30-minute commute still lose 22 hours (nearly three full work days) annually sitting in traffic.”

Significant investment is needed to keep America moving.

- Travel on the U.S. highway system has increased five-fold over the past 60 years from 600 billion miles driven to almost three trillion in 2009.

- Annual travel is expected to climb to nearly 4.5 trillion miles by 2050, even with aggressive strategies to cut the rate of growth to only one percent per year.

- If most or all of our capital investments were made in system rehabilitation and little to none in adding needed capacity, the condition of the nation’s roads and bridges would improve, but traffic would grind to a halt.

To read the full report, go to the AASHTO website at:
http://expandingcapacity.transportation.org/unlocking_gridlock/gridlock.html

Upward Trend in Vehicle-Miles Resumed During 2009

The Research and Innovative Technology Administration’s Bureau of Transportation Statistics has released a Transportation Trends in Focus that explores vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) on the nation’s highways. According to the report, after a two-year interruption to a long-term upward trend, the number of vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) on the nation’s highways appears to have resumed a pattern of upward growth in 2009.

To view this report, go to:
http://www.bts.gov/publications/bts_transportation_trends_in_focus/2010_04_01/pdf/entire.pdf

Worst Drivers in America

The GMAC Insurance sixth annual survey quizzed more than 5,200 licensed Americans from across the country on their driving knowledge. The test consisted of 20 questions. Some other notable trends: Older drivers outperformed younger ones and men did better on the test than women but also flunked it at a higher rate. One-in-four drivers admitted that they did “distracting behaviors” such as selecting music on their iPhones, applying make-up or reading, though only 5 percent admitted to texting while driving. The study found that “nearly 1 in 5 licensed drivers -- roughly 38 million Americans -- would not pass a written drivers test exam if taken today.” A whopping 85 percent could not identify the correct action to take when approaching a steady yellow traffic light (hint: it involves the brake pedal). Many drivers also remained uncertain about safe following distances. The average grades on the test are shown below for the six worst States.

1.(WORST)	New York	-	70.0
2.	New Jersey	-	70.5
3.	Dist. of Columbia	-	71.9
4.	California	-	73.3
5.	Rhode Island	-	73.8
6.	Louisiana	-	74.1