

For immediate release

Thursday, March 15, 2007

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NEW REPORT ASSIGNS FAILING GRADE FOR TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND ROAD CONDITIONS IN THE RENO / CARSON CITY AREA; TRAFFIC SAFETY RECEIVES GRADE OF ‘D’, CONGESTION RECEIVES ‘C’ GRADE

ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING NEEDED TO RELIEVE CONGESTION, IMPROVE SAFETY AND MAKE NEEDED ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT NEVADA

EDS.: THE REPORT INCLUDES LISTS OF THE MOST CONGESTED SECTIONS OF ROADWAY IN RENO / CARSON CITY AND NEEDED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE AREA.

Carson City, March 15, 2007 – Poor road conditions and inadequate levels of transportation funding earn the Reno / Carson City area a grade of ‘F’ in both road conditions and transportation funding, while traffic safety in the area rates a ‘D’ and traffic congestion receives a grade of ‘C’. This is according to a new report released today by TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C. The TRIP report also gives the Reno / Carson City area a grade of ‘A’ for bridge conditions.

The report, entitled “Making the Grade in Nevada: An Analysis of the Ability of Nevada’s Transportation System to Meet the State’s Need for Safe and Efficient Mobility,” finds that the state faces a \$3.8 billion shortfall in transportation funding through 2015, at a time when the buying power of the 17.65 cents-per-gallon motor fuel tax dedicated to state highway repairs has decreased by 43 percent since it was last raised in 1992.

According to the TRIP report, 30 percent of major roads and highways in the Reno / Carson City have pavements in poor condition and an additional 20 percent are in mediocre condition. Pavement conditions in the state are expected to worsen because funding for the state’s pavement repair program has not been adequate to keep pace with deterioration. From 2004 to 2009, Nevada is expected to spend \$506 million dollars on pavement preservation, but needs to spend \$1.27 billion to keep pavement conditions in their current condition – a \$768 million shortfall.

Only six of the region’s 225 bridges are rated as deficient, earning the area an ‘A’ for bridge conditions.

“Without an increase in transportation investment, the Reno and Carson City areas will not be able to move forward with numerous projects that would improve road and bridge

conditions, enhance safety, relieve congestion and attract economic development,” said Stan Goodin, Board Member of the Nevada Highway Users Alliance.

According to the TRIP report, Reno / Carson City has a traffic fatality rate is 15.4 fatalities per 100,000 population, earning the area a grade of ‘D’ for traffic safety. Though current congestion levels are considered moderate, without significant transportation improvements, traffic delays in the Reno / Carson City area will increase eight fold by the year 2030, mirroring present-day congestion levels in Las Vegas. The TRIP report contains a list of the most congested sections of roadway in the Reno / Carson City area.

“The TRIP report highlights the benefits of an efficient, well-maintained and adequately funded transportation system,” said William Wilkins, Executive Director of TRIP. “Investments in the state’s transportation system improve safety, while enhancing economic vitality and the quality of life in Nevada.”

Additional findings of the TRIP report:

- A Blue Ribbon Task Force created by Nevada’s State Transportation Board of Directors found in December, 2006 that the state faces a \$3.8 billion shortfall in funding through 2015 for highway projects needed to accommodate significant traffic growth in the state.
- The Blue Ribbon Task Force report recommended that the state complete the following projects in the Reno / Carson City area by 2015: widening I-80 from Robb Drive to Vista Boulevard, widening US 395 from the Spaghetti Bowl to Stead, and improving Pyramid Highway.
- The buying power of Nevada’s 17.65 cents-per-gallon motor fuel tax dedicated to state highway repairs has decreased by 43 percent since it was last increased in 1992. This has reduced Nevada’s state’s motor-fuel tax dedicated to highway repairs to the equivalent of 10.1 cents-per-gallon in 1992 dollars.
- A recent report by the Reason Foundation found that by 2030, the average rush hour trip in Reno/Carson City will take 39 percent longer to complete than during non-rush hours – a traffic delay level similar to present-day Las Vegas – unless significant highway improvements are completed.
- In 2005, The Reno/Carson City area had a traffic fatality rate of 10.7 fatalities per 100,000 population, lower than the statewide average of 17.4 fatalities per 100,000 population and the national average of 14.7 fatalities per 100,000 population. In 2005 there were 48 traffic fatalities in the Reno/Carson City area.
- From 1990 to 2005, vehicle travel in Nevada increased at a rate approximately nine times greater than new highway lane capacity was added. Vehicle travel in Nevada increased by 103 percent from 1990 to 2005, and is expected to increase another 125 percent by 2030.