



Changing course to preserve America's roads



To reverse transportation system failure nationwide, a significant change in policy is urgently needed.

Crumbling roads put US on path to economic decline

Our transportation infrastructure is an essential component for the **security** and **economic strength** of our country, individual states and local municipalities. Infrastructure is, however, at serious risk and must be protected and maintained.

Commerce depends in large part on highways, roads and bridges, but ironically the current approach to maintaining them is actually resulting in greater deterioration.

We must change course to stop the decline of our vast highway system and begin to reverse spiraling reconstruction costs and retain US economic strength.

The **Coalition to Preserve America's Roads (CPAR)** is coordinating a campaign to educate public officials, the media and all stakeholders, in an effort to change current policies.

The nation's highways are valued at more than \$3 trillion. As responsible stewards of the system, present and future generations should not allow the investment to deteriorate.



Spending money to keep good roads in good condition is the most cost-effective way to save America's highways.



We're not talking pothole filling, but pothole prevention. Preservation is proactive, not reactive.



**ROAD
CLOSED**

Widespread road deterioration, inadequate budgets threaten system

Deterioration of our roads and bridges worsens each year, resulting in escalating and unaffordable costs for repair. To reverse transportation system deterioration nationwide, a significant change in policy is urgently needed.

As a result of misplaced spending priorities, the nation's roads are getting worse. In 2009, the American Society of Civil Engineers graded the nation's roads a D-, down from a D in 2005.

Spending on capital projects (new roads) continues to exceed spending on operations and maintenance. In 2008, all levels of government spent more than twice as much on capital projects as on operations and maintenance. We continue to build new miles of roads but we are not making the necessary investment in preserving them.



The current approach to our highways, roads and bridges – is bankrupting state and local budgets and debilitating a major component of our transportation infrastructure.

Preservation helps stretch tight road budgets

Unfortunately, federal, state and local transportation agencies for too long have been reactive, rather than proactive, in funding necessary maintenance. As a result, too many roads are entirely rebuilt far sooner than would have been necessary if they had received regular, proper maintenance -- the most efficient use of tax dollars. Rehabilitating a road that has fallen into disrepair costs substantially more than keeping the road in good condition in the first place.

The cost of keeping a mile of road in good condition is **less than half** over time of letting a road deteriorate and then making major repairs. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), every dollar spent on road maintenance avoids **\$6 to \$14** needed later to rebuild a road that has irreparably deteriorated.

State and federal leaders can encourage fiscal responsibility and stretch tax dollars by allocating more money to pavement preservation and policies that focus on sustainability.



“Worst first” not best policy

States, counties and municipalities are disproportionately devoting their transportation budgets to addressing the worst roads too late, rather than on **preventive maintenance** that would preserve and extend the life of roads and save money in the long run. By focusing on the worst roads, agencies are waiting until their roads have become the most expensive to fix before taking action.

Preservation approach puts more people to work

Taking a proactive preservation approach to sustaining our roads and bridges creates more employment in the road construction industry than does the

reactive “worst first” reconstruction approach. More people are employed in a preservation approach than a reconstruction approach, because preservation requires more frequent, although less costly, and disruptive road treatments.



Pavement preservation uses fewer natural resources, reduces traffic congestion

Pavement preservation also uses considerably less natural resources – stone, gravel and sand – than does reconstruction. From a motorist perspective, preservation significantly cuts down on road closures and the resulting traffic congestion.



2857 Jolly Road
Okemos, Michigan 48864
www.preserveroads.org

CPAR calls for change at all levels of road ownership

Here in the US, we have come to accept a reactive system as “normal” for our roads, in which we wait until road deficiencies become evident even to the untrained eye and major rehabilitation or complete reconstruction are the only options.

CPAR urges public officials charged with the responsibility for our roads and bridges to change course, stop wasting road assets and use road budgets responsibly – to protect our long-term investment.