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COUNTY COMMISSION

Volume 62, Number 5
December 2018

FUNDING COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGES



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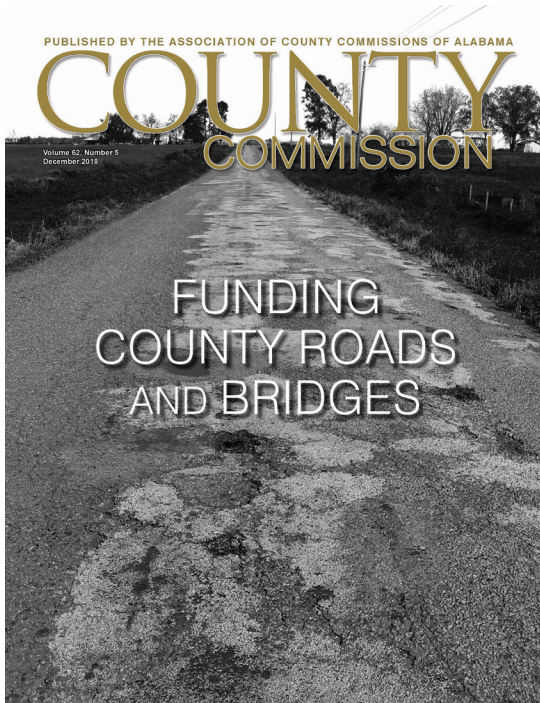
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in this issue

VOLUME 62, NUMBER 5



Inadequate funding for county roads and bridges is holding back progress in Alabama, costing time, lives, jobs and money.



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President's PERSPECTIVE



Hon. Tony Cherry
President

Tony L. Cherry

High Price to Pay if County Family Does Nothing

Additional Funding for County Roads and Bridges Only Possible with All Hands on Deck

In early December, nearly 400 county officials and employees from all over our state gathered for an orientation class for our newly-elected county commissioners and our annual Legislative Conference. It was an amazing three days, and it was my honor to continue my service as your president by presiding over this most successful kickoff to the 2019 year.

The major takeaway from the gathering was the importance of our “County Family,” including the more than 60 new commissioners and probate judges, speaking with ONE Voice over the next three months and throughout the entire 2019 session of the Alabama Legislature. It is important that all of us carry our weight and fulfill the responsibility to speak for the people who depend on a strong and responsive county government.

Since I took my place as President in August, I have consistently encouraged my fellow County Family members to also find their individual place in our steadfast organization, and I want to encourage our newcomers to do the same, as we are in the midst of a critical time for county government.

For far too long, we have done little to expand our road and bridge resources without recognizing that the price tag of staying stagnant is much more damaging than the “cost” of investing in our future.

In our personal lives, sometimes unpleasant outcomes can be sidestepped by simply choosing to do nothing. Avoiding unnecessary personal expenditures, unwanted consequences and unexpected accidents is often preferred to the outcomes of rash decisions at home. But in our “public lives” as elected officials, protecting the status quo almost always means losing ground and failing your community.

That’s about where we are with our roads and bridges. The cost of doing nothing is high — 1,100 lives

are lost on our roads annually. Look at that number, and then think about all of the heartbroken families. And 60 percent of those deaths happen in rural areas.

The price tag for doing nothing increases with missed opportunities in economic development, hours spent on school buses detouring our failing bridges, and unnecessary expenditures on automobile repairs for you and me, as well as the transportation costs for our farmers and timber owners.

Maybe your county has all the good jobs it needs. Maybe the school children in your district have an extra hour a day to sit on a bus. Maybe the farmers and loggers and other industries are happy with the conditions of the roads and bridges. And maybe the people who vote for you have, honestly, decided that they will just have to live with a sub-standard transportation system.

But in my county — and I trust in yours — the people deserve better.

If we do nothing, no one will fix the problem for us. As time marches on, more paved roads will crumble; they’ll crumble so badly that we have no choice but to grind them into gravel, while more and more bridges will pass their 50th birthdays.

All of us, including those who have just joined our County Family, will be asked to take an active role this year. On the next page, I’ve outlined three specific things each and every one of us can do today to help ensure additional funding for county roads and bridges.

The price of doing nothing has been staggering. If we are to stop waiting and, finally, start attacking our transportation needs, then everyone in county government must be a part of the solution.

The #OneVoice of county government has a place for you. Let’s get to work!

Menu



Proactive Steps You Can Take Today

■ **Get the ACCA67 mobile app**

For great advocacy tools at your fingertips, search the Apple App Store or Google Play Store for ACCA67— all caps, with no spaces. The app is an exclusive, members-only benefit for the County Family, and you can contact Abby Fitzpatrick (334-263-7594 | afitzpatrick@alabamacounties.org) for help creating your account or resetting your password.

■ **Register for an ACCA District Meeting**

In the weeks leading up to the Legislative Session, the Association has scheduled six District Meetings in locations throughout the state. Choose the meeting that is convenient for you. Turn to page 31 for details.

■ **Know your facts**

This magazine issue is chock-full of facts and figures to help you make the case for investing in county roads and bridges. Commit some key points to memory, and share them with your legislators, local media and constituents.



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Sonny Brasfield
Executive Director

Sonny Brasfield

The Last Time Alabama Moved Forward on Infrastructure, I Was a New Dad

Firstborn Now Eyeing His 28th Birthday

It was early June of 1991 and the Alabama Legislature was focused on a bill that would provide funding for the improvement of roads and bridges in Alabama. But my attention was, to say the least, a little distracted.

You see, early in the morning of Sunday, June 2, Kathy and I raced to the hospital for the birth of our first child. For a short time that morning, even Sonny Brasfield didn't think about counting votes and conference committees. Those things were thousands of miles away as our lives were altered by the blessing we received.

But a couple of days later, I resumed my normal position to witness the Alabama House of Representatives actually pass a bill creating a new road and bridge program for our state. The journey to final passage of that legislation was a twisted — and challenging — road. But eventually, we were successful, and when the law took effect the following year, Alabama counties and the state began work on improving Alabama's transportation system.

When it was over, a younger Sonny Brasfield used his column in this very magazine to record how the passage of that legislation was intertwined with a new family's journey to bring home their new son. Now, almost three decades later, that birth is still linked (at least in my mind) with the last time Alabama took a step forward for its infrastructure.

I guess it's not surprising that I am one of the few folks working in public policy today who was actually around during the early 1990s. I remember every little detail of that effort to raise revenue for

infrastructure — even though it's been almost 28 years since that Sunday morning when Perry Robert Brasfield joined us.

Now, on the personal side, since the summer of 1991 we've seen Perry grow into a wonderful, kind and insightful man. And, to the surprise of no one who knows me, in between family activities and milestones, we've also spent countless hours at the Alabama Statehouse promoting and protecting county government.

In that role, we've traveled this state — over and over and over again — promoting, organizing and assisting those in county government. We've designed plan after plan after plan for our roads and bridges. But each time we've been told, in one way or another, that the plans would have to wait for another year. And then another.

Away from county government, it's been an incredible journey, as well.

We've watched as Perry learned to walk and as he's broken an ankle — twice. We've eaten watermelon and homemade ice cream. We've slept in our car seat, and we've stayed up all night after the Homecoming dance.

But all the while, we've not been able to convince the public to support needed repairs to our infrastructure.

We've laughed and we've cried — over and over again. We've built sand castles at the beach and a big swing set in the backyard. We've ridden tricycles and trains. We've gotten our hands and pants dirty playing baseball all over the state, and we've worn our Sunday best to worship our Lord.

But all the while, we've let our roads and bridges age without proper attention. We've let the rising price of road construction and petroleum-

based products rob our counties of any real opportunity to make meaningful improvements in the roads and bridges that support agriculture and the timber industry.

In the meantime, we've welcomed a new sister into our lives and we've had to say "goodbye" to Granny and Granddaddy. We've played the role of President Roosevelt on the stage, and we've gotten sweaty — and very tired — on the wrestling mat. We've played the drums and the guitar, and we've wrecked our new car — twice — without getting hurt!

But all the while, we've searched for innovative solutions to our problems. And even when we found a couple — convincing the public to support a \$250 million bond issue for bridges in 2000 and the innovative ATRIP program earlier this decade

We've let the rising price of road construction and petroleum-based products rob our counties of any real opportunity to make meaningful improvements in the roads and bridges that support agriculture and the timber industry.

— those projects have only helped us keep our heads afloat.

In the meantime, we've been to Boston and to Miami. We've watched the Tide capture a bunch of championships and give a couple away. We've sat in bleachers at Wrigley Field and on the ground at Amen Corner. We've worn a crimson cap and gown, and we've watched our sister do the same.

We've gotten our first job, and we've cried at the funeral of our friend. We've bought our first house, and we've left our lunch money at home by mistake. We've ridden our go-cart with our Papa, laughed at the fair with our best girl and remained the apple of our mother's eye.

We've done all of those things — and more.

But despite all of our focused efforts and energy, we've still not found a way to enact new revenue to make our roads and bridges safer for the little boys who will be born to new parents in the summer of 2019.

We've waited and we've waited and we've waited.

We've waited so long that the little boy who came into our lives in 1991 is now about to be 28 years old. And maybe, just maybe, in 2019, we will have finally waited long enough. ■

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334-277-7260

Northport

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205-339-0300

Pelham

2149 Highway 31 South
205-988-4472



Inadequate Road and Bridge Funding: Costly Consequences Keep Adding Up

Bad roads and bridges are running up an expensive tab in this state.

“Alabama’s transportation infrastructure has not kept pace with our population or our economy,” said the Alabama Transportation Institute’s Justice Smyth. “As a result, it is costing us time, lives, jobs, opportunity and money.”

While some consequences are

easier to see and put a number on than others, taken together they diminish quality of life, hinder business activity and threaten Alabama’s attractiveness to future economic development prospects.

“The consensus from everyone is that we cannot continue to maintain our road and bridge system in a safe condition, to promote economic development, to provide safe

transportation for school buses, log trucks, farmers and first responders unless we have additional revenue,” said Sonny Brasfield, Executive Director of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama.

The solution is additional funding, which is easy to measure in dollars and cents. However, “the cost of ‘doing nothing’ is not zero,” Smyth said.

Road Fatalities: Too Many Lost Lives

1,100 Annual Traffic Fatalities on Alabama Roads

The most recent figures available show that there were 1,100 traffic fatalities on Alabama roads in 2016, a sharp increase from the year before, according to ATI.



60% Fatalities in Rural Areas

The majority of these traffic deaths occurred in rural rather than urban areas. Travel time to trauma centers is a big factor. Ambulances and other large emergency vehicles may not be able to travel the most direct route due to weight-limited bridges.

1/3 Infrastructure Itself Partly to Blame

In a third of fatal crashes, roadway features are likely a contributing factor to the crash itself, according to TRIP, a national transportation research group. Features that impact safety include lane widths and markings, intersection design and shoulder conditions.



Infrastructure: Weak Link for Economic Development

In the economic development game, Alabama's string of signature wins started 25 years ago with Mercedes and has continued through the years, most recently with announcements from Google and Mazda Toyota.

Three "must haves" are always atop a site selector's list: favorable business climate, quality workforce and solid transportation infrastructure.

"In two of those three, Alabama does really pretty well. Business Facilities magazine recently ranked Alabama No. 1 for having the best business climate in the country. AIDT, the community college workforce development training program and the universities all do a really good job of preparing a workforce," said Justice Smyth of the Alabama Transportation Institute. "Where we fall short and are continuing to lag behind is in our transportation infrastructure."



Annually, \$436 billion in goods are shipped to and from sites in Alabama, mostly by truck, according to TRIP.



Annual Costs to Alabama Motorists

\$1.5 billion

Additional Vehicle Operating Costs: faster vehicle depreciation, extra repairs, higher fuel consumption, increased wear on tires

+ \$1.5 billion

Crashes: lost productivity at work and home, property damage, medical expenses, legal and court costs, increased traffic congestion, emergency services

+ \$1.2 billion

Congestion: lost time and wasted fuel

\$4.2 billion

**DEFICIENT ROADS COST ALABAMA
MOTORISTS ANNUALLY**

Traffic Congestion Takes Heavy Toll in Alabama

Increasing levels of **traffic congestion** cause **significant delays** in Alabama, particularly in its larger urban areas, **choking commuting and commerce**. Traffic congestion robs commuters of time and money and *imposes increased costs on businesses, shippers and manufacturers*, which are often passed along to the consumer.

("Alabama Transportation by the Numbers," TRIP)



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New ACCA Research Shines Light on Crumbling County Roads and Bridges

Findings from the ACCA Road and Bridge Data Collection Survey were released in early December, giving county leaders up-to-date statistics heading into the 2019 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature.

"Counties truly owe a debt of gratitude to each other for investing the staff time to provide this invaluable data," said ACCA Executive Director Sonny Brasfield. "Taken together, the information paints a vivid and alarming picture of county roads and bridges today and in the next five years."

The survey is a sequel to "A Silent Crisis," a publication from the Association of County Engineers of Alabama that used 2010 data to sound the alarm about inadequate funding for local roads and bridges. The 2018 update, called "The Silence is Broken: Continuing the Conversation," details the substantial shortfall of available funding compared to the needed infrastructure maintenance and improvements.



Find data on roads and bridges, reported on a county-by-county basis, on page 15-16. Five-year projections with current funding are included.

Statewide Task Force to Release Findings

A wealth of new data and analysis is forthcoming from the Alabama Transportation Institute, which has provided technical support to the infrastructure task force commissioned this year by Senate President Pro Tempore Del Marsh and House Speaker Mac McCutcheon.

The full-length report, "Alabama 2040: Transportation Infrastructure System Needs and Challenges," is scheduled for release to the public before March 5, the start date for the 2019 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature.

In the meantime, the Institute will publish a series of short, single-issue reports. In two pages or less, each one will provide an examination of an important topic, such as "Historical and Projected Vehicle Miles Traveled in Alabama," "Characteristics of Freight Movement on the State Roadway Network" and "What Does It Cost to Maintain a Road?"

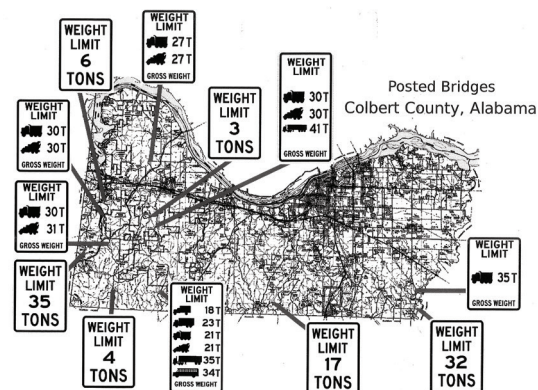
The infrastructure task force, which has served to convene a broad and growing list of interested stakeholders, is organized into five working groups focused on physical infrastructure, revenue, ports and waterways, technology, and policy recommendations.

County leaders have been actively engaged in the task force, with participation from ACCA and affiliate groups for county engineers and emergency managers.



Weight-Limited Bridges Cause Costly Detours

- Some 45% of county bridges are 50 or more years old, making them overdue for rehabilitation or replacement.
- Older bridges are more likely to have posted weight limits, which interfere with the flow of regular traffic.
- Drivers must take detour routes that can add miles to their trips, extending the school day for students and delaying emergency responders.
- Affected vehicles often include school buses, log trucks, delivery vehicles, ambulances and fire trucks.



Here's an example showing how weight-limited bridges impede travel in one Alabama county.

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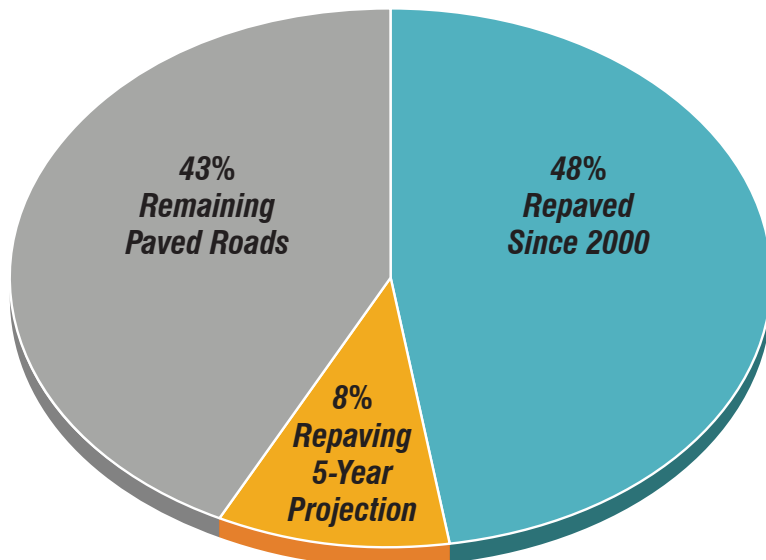
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Outlook is Bleak for County Roads

Alabama County Road System

Total Roads 60,491 Miles

Paved Roads 44,790 Miles



Note: Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.



Sophisticated Auto Manufacturing Depends on County Roads

Alabama's auto manufacturers and suppliers are like a growing string of pearls linking the state.

Each facility is closely tied to others up and down the supply chain in a system of just-in-time, just-in-sequence delivery.

Road and bridge infrastructure can make or break those precision logistics, and county roads play an integral role. For example, a pair of tier-1 Hyundai suppliers in Butler County rely on Honoraville Road — part of the county system — to bring in deliveries from a trio of tier-2 suppliers in neighboring Crenshaw County.

"For Hyundai, every minute that assembly line is shut down is a \$10,000 impact," said Justice Smyth of the Alabama Transportation Institute. "It's a loss in productivity, and Hyundai is going to pass that penalty down to the tier-1 and tier-2 suppliers, and that eventually hits the consumers."

Keeping the Pace

Paved roads generally have an expected lifespan of 15 years.

Since 2000, Alabama counties have resurfaced about half their paved roads, making the other half overdue for resurfacing.

To stay on track with a 15-year resurfacing cycle, a county would need to redo a third of its roads every five years. With current funding, projections show only one of Alabama's 67 counties could get close to that benchmark.



Multiplier Effect

INVESTING
\$1.00
IN ROADS & BRIDGES

RESULTS IN
\$5.20
IN BENEFITS
(e.g., lower vehicle maintenance costs, better gas mileage, etc.)

Source: Federal Highway Administration

Converting Paved Roads Back to Gravel

Seventy-five years ago, Alabama's progress in the modern world was going to be measured in miles and miles of soon-to-be-paved Farm-to-Market Roads.

However, in the new millennium, it is not uncommon to find county roads going back to gravel — or “back to the Stone Age.”

There's no indication that Alabamians of today like unpaved roads — dusty one day and muddy the next — any better than previous generations, but the choice to go backward is financially driven.

Mary C. Smith Road in Barbour County is a typical example. The hard surface was steadily disintegrating, and the 3.7-mile route was low on the priority list for repaving.

“The road was originally paved in the '70s and got so bad that it had to be turned back to a gravel road for lack of funding,” said County Engineer Matthew Murphy.

After the conversion, the road's maintenance has been handled by county crews with county equipment.

'Getting by' with Lower Standards

While stop-gap measures are better than no maintenance at all, they are another result of inadequate funding for county roads and bridges, a result that brings further consequences for Alabamians in the form of lower property values and increased vehicle repairs.

Citizens seem to accept the patching of potholes and cracks, but others say there's a better way.

“It's almost like a surgeon caring for injured patients with nothing but Band-Aids when you know they really need stitches to correct the damage,” said Colbert County Engineer John Bedford.

On local roads, an inch or more of plant mix asphalt makes an excellent surface. Every 15 years, that road should be repaved with the same high-quality material.

However, counties frequently have to maintain plant mix roads with a chip seal or similar treatment — basically a half-inch (or less) layer of liquid asphalt and rock. It's a strategy that falls short of proper restoration, but it does prolong the road's life.

“It's getting us by until we're adequately funded, but it is not the same as properly preserving the value of an asset,” he said.



Common Dilemma: Filling potholes could not halt disintegration, and there was no funding to resurface. Barbour County ultimately decided to grind up the remaining pavement and turn Mary C. Smith Road back to gravel.

Photo: Barbour County



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ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COMMISSIONS OF ALABAMA

Road and Bridge Data Collection Survey

*FIVE-YEAR PROJECTIONS WITHOUT ADDITIONAL REVENUE

**Includes resurfacing, reconstruction and construction*

COUNTY	Total Miles of County Roads	Miles of Paved County Roads	Projection: Miles to be Repaved* in Next 5 Years*	Total Number of County Bridges	County Bridges 50 Years or Older	Projection: Bridge Replacements in Next 5 Years*
AUTAUGA	667	336	24	71	23	1
BALDWIN	1,567	1,378	280	163	21	5
BARBOUR	742	438	60	134	62	0
BIBB	527	384	16	60	32	0
BLOUNT	1,134	994	126	120	71	6
BULLOCK	380	315	25	76	42	0
BUTLER	725	505	13	101	28	2
CALHOUN	1,116	1,112	75	150	75	2
CHAMBERS	784	443	49	144	50	0
CHEROKEE	807	770	100	120	89	0
CHILTON	931	535	14	102	31	0
CHOCTAW	600	400	25	101	52	2
CLARKE	807	298	10	95	55	1
CLAY	680	432	100	87	47	1
CLEBURNE	720	394	15	97	40	3
COFFEE	759	528	20	153	73	0
COLBERT	660	630	75	99	37	0
CONECUH	810	415	75	162	62	5
COOSA	600	417	40	93	46	0
COVINGTON	1,290	630	7	283	160	11
CRENSHAW	715	282	44	135	42	4
CULLMAN	1,563	1,334	125	153	99	7
DALE	500	459	15	104	50	0
DALLAS	847	475	25	104	45	0
DEKALB	1,470	1,145	70	167	89	0
ELMORE	1,000	818	30	123	20	3
ESCAMBIA	880	550	40	104	31	0
ETOWAH	866	794	30	90	44	1
FAYETTE	824	437	30	172	61	0
FRANKLIN	812	625	50	114	47	0
GENEVA	909	402	20	168	74	0
GREENE	1,048	672	6	94	38	2
HALE	595	384	35	131	104	9
HENRY	690	510	35	95	42	0

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Road and Bridge Data Collection Survey

*FIVE-YEAR PROJECTIONS WITHOUT ADDITIONAL REVENUE

**Includes resurfacing, reconstruction and construction*

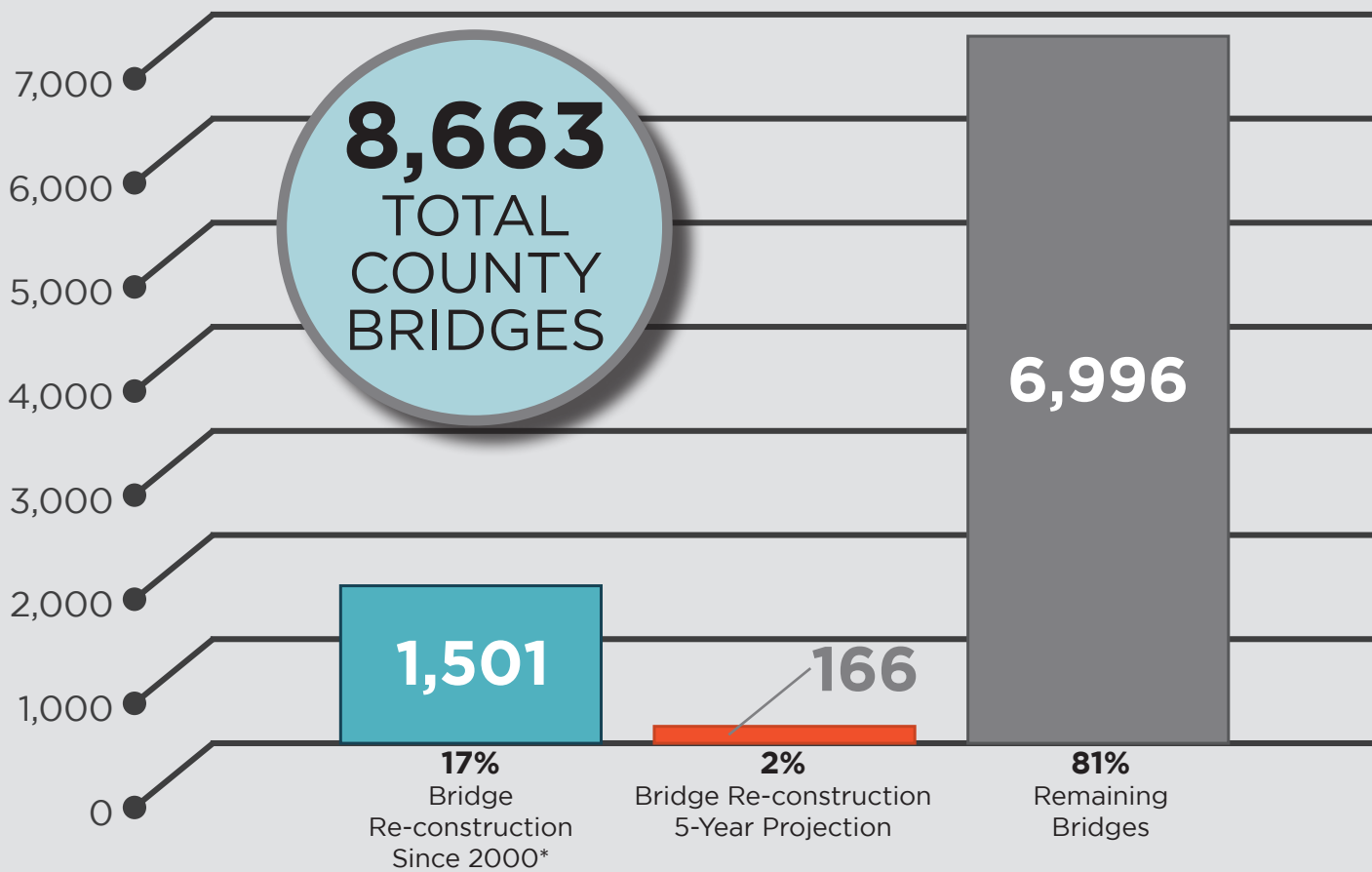
COUNTY	Total Miles of County Roads	Miles of Paved County Roads	Projection: Miles to be Repaved* in Next 5 Years*	Total Number of County Bridges	County Bridges 50 Years or Older	Projection: Bridge Replacements in Next 5 Years*
HOUSTON	941	794	36	152	57	1
JACKSON	1,100	1,060	60	185	113	2
JEFFERSON	2,100	2,100	150	297	122	10
LAMAR	801	391	25	113	62	1
LAUDERDALE	1,382	1,293	150	189	87	3
LAWRENCE	864	681	40	142	59	0
LEE	851	674	50	109	50	7
LIMESTONE	1,040	1,027	75	160	103	0
LOWNDES	600	325	32	94	49	1
MACON	575	342	12	101	80	2
MADISON	1,400	1,400		252	198	
MARENGO	646	345	15	98	16	5
MARION	937	732	20	112	49	1
MARSHALL	1,168	1,065	50	114	33	0
MOBILE	1,402	1,130	150	162	37	4
MONROE	707	357	15	98	20	8
MONTGOMERY	575	552	146	205	51	0
MORGAN	1,040	1,019	97	125	40	3
PERRY	682	356	25	111	77	0
PICKENS	850	392	32	156	69	1
PIKE	765	460	33	161	70	16
RANDOLPH	960	410	63	122	32	0
RUSSELL	638	439	70	108	56	0
SHELBY	961	844	140	189	45	11
ST. CLAIR	679	676	200	62	30	1
SUMTER	505	352	6	115	83	4
TALLADEGA	1,058	978	35	123	50	3
TALLAPOOSA	957	735	40	82	63	0
TUSCALOOSA	1,606	1,241	96	209	46	11
WALKER	1,115	976	35	99	58	2
WASHINGTON	873	430	15	117	76	0
WILCOX	626	390	35	79	31	4
WINSTON	1,062	583	41	57	19	0
TOTALS:	60,491	44,790	3,693	8,663	3,913	166

Bridge Funding Falls Short



What You See and What You Don't: These are above and below images of the same bridge. School buses cannot safely cross a bridge with a three-ton weight limit.

Alabama County Bridge System

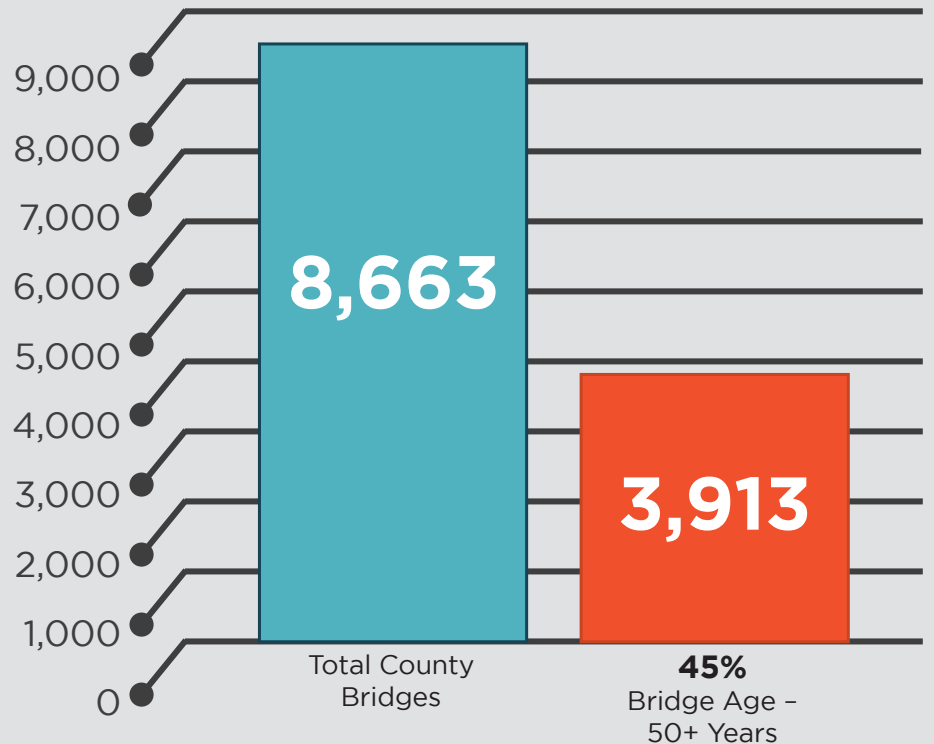


*Note: An unusually large number of bridge projects have been completed since 2000 because of two special funding initiatives, the GARVEE Bonds Bridge Program and ATRIP.



Most of Alabama's bridges were designed for a lifespan of 50 years, and a large share — some 45% — of county bridges are overdue for major rehabilitation or replacement due to age alone.

Bridge Age: Alabama County Bridge System



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Bridges on Borrowed Time

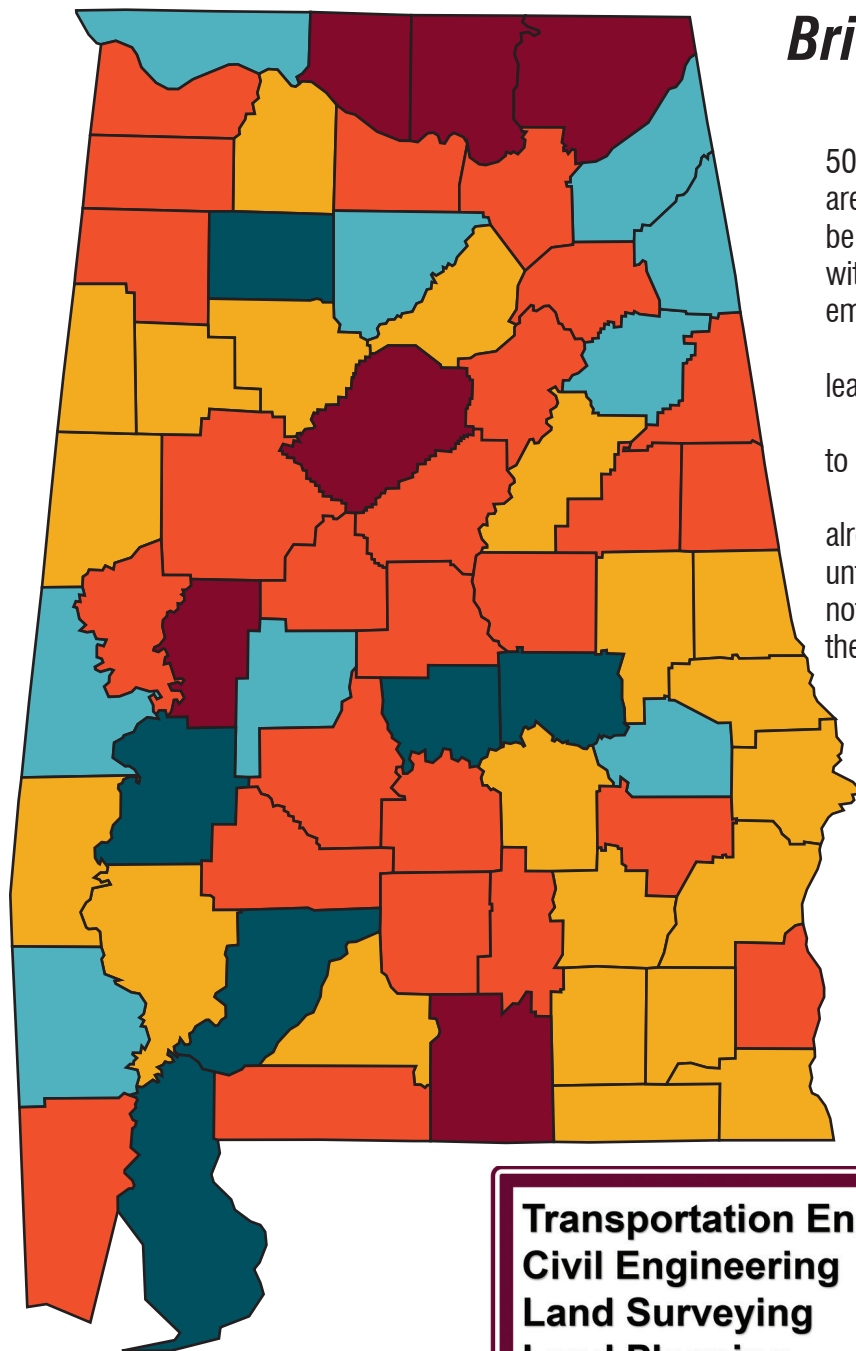
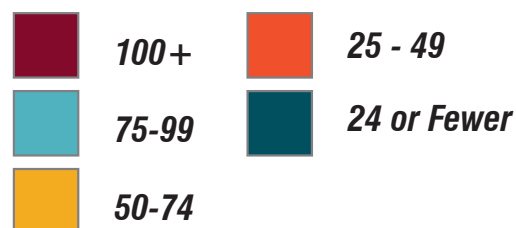
Bridges are typically built for a service life of 50 years. After the half-century mark, the spans are overdue for rebuilding and more likely to be subject to weight limits, which can interfere with efficient travel for school buses, log trucks, emergency responders and others.

The average county has 58 bridges that are at least a half century old.

On average, current funding will allow a county to rebuild three bridges within the next 5 years.

That means, in each county, 55 bridges already more than 50 years old will remain untouched through 2023, and that number does not include the additional structures that will pass the half-century mark in the meantime.

Number of County Bridges 50+ Years Old



Digging Deeper: Bridge Construction 5-Year Projection

58 Average Number of
Bridges Age 50+
Per County

3 Average Number of Bridge
Projects Per County Over
the Next 5 Years

Transportation Engineering
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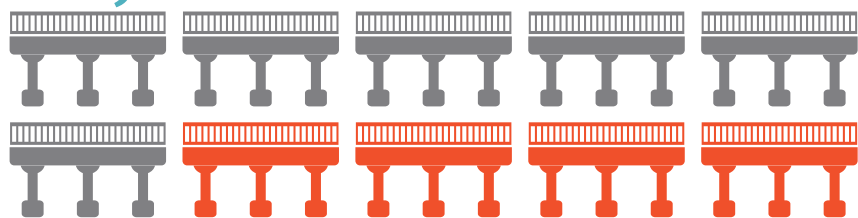
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8,663 COUNTY BRIDGES
in Alabama



BRIDGES ON BORROWED TIME

45% County
Bridges Aged
50 Years
or Older

Alabama Counties Lack Funding to Maintain Roads & Bridges

County Commissioners Support Legislative Action for Additional Funding

ESSENTIALS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



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0604910

MILES
County Roads
in Alabama

That is more than
two laps around
the equator.



ROAD FATALITIES ON THE RISE IN ALABAMA



1,100

lives lost annually

60%

of road fatalities
occur in rural areas



Equivalent to a
regional commercial
jet crashing and killing
everyone on board -
every 3½ weeks.



SOURCES: American Society of Civil Engineers; Association of County Commissions of Alabama; and Alabama Transportation Institute, University of Alabama

Much Road & Bridge Work Needed, But Funding Falls Short

As ATRIP's one-time investment in local roads and bridges comes to an end, road work will slow to a crawl with current funding.

No additional funding is currently available, and counties have no way to secure additional resources without the Alabama Legislature's help.

Next 5 Years

2% county bridges to be replaced

8% county paved roads to be resurfaced



MAINTENANCE: Falling Further Behind

	STANDARD	ALABAMA
County ROADS	Repave 100% every 15 years	Repave 57% 2000-2023
County BRIDGES	Rebuild 100% every 50 years	Rebuild 19% 2000-2023

ASCE Infrastructure REPORT CARD

ROADS

Alabama



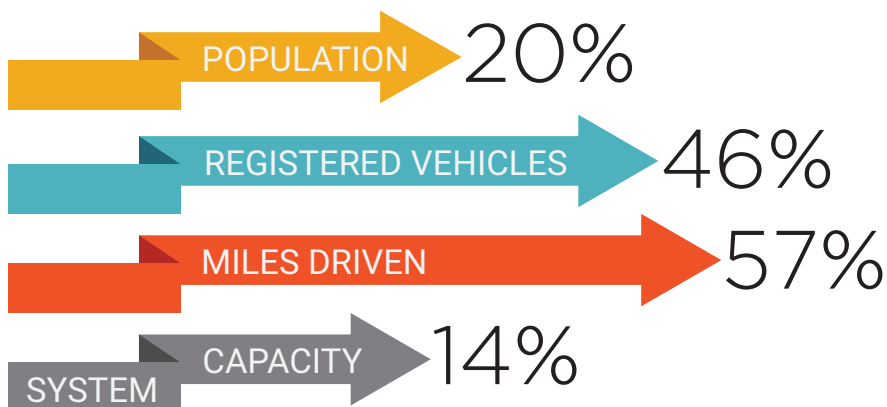
GRADING SCALE

D = 51-69% = Poor, At Risk

Poor to fair condition and mostly below standard, with many elements approaching the end of their service life. A large portion exhibits significant deterioration. Condition and capacity are of significant concern with strong risk of failure.

GROWTH 1990-2015

Alabama on the Move, but Infrastructure Lagging



Costs Rise, but Funding Declines

- Since 2003, inflation on road and bridge construction has increased twice as much as the consumer price index.
- Improvements in fuel efficiency continue to undercut funding for necessary infrastructure.

SOURCES: American Society of Civil Engineers; Association of County Commissions of Alabama; and Alabama Transportation Institute, University of Alabama

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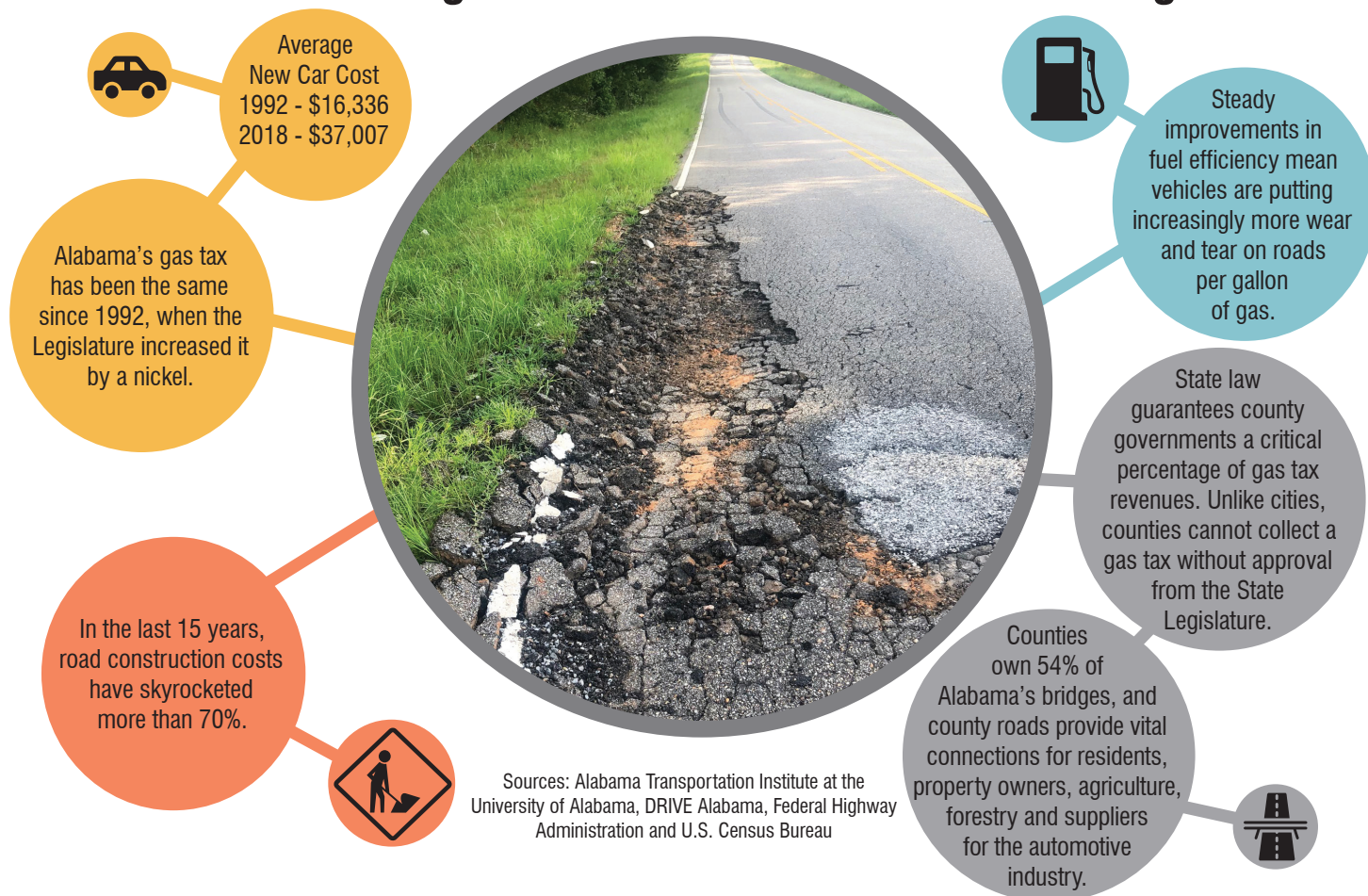


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A Funding Problem Requires a Funding Solution

How did Alabama get in this hole? And how do we get out?



Where Does Road and Bridge Money Come From?

Unlike cities, counties in Alabama cannot establish a fuel tax for roads and bridges on their own. For counties, approval from the Alabama Legislature is required, and some counties have local support for their road systems.

However, the lifeblood of county road department budgets comes from state and federal sources. Here's a breakdown of major sources that are common to all counties:

State Fuel Taxes

The mainstay of county road budgets is the county's share of the state gasoline tax. The county portion is largely divided according to population, with another amount split equally among all 67 counties.

These funds are protected by strict earmarks to ensure dollars benefit roads and bridges.

Federal Aid

Counties receive a small

percentage of federal taxes on gasoline and diesel. Distribution is handled by the Alabama Department of Transportation, and a 20% match is required. For example, a county must contribute \$100,000 from other sources to secure \$500,000 in federal road dollars.

Federal funds can only be spent on certain roads and bridges that meet criteria from the Federal Highway Administration.

Other State Sources

State law allocates a portion of the following to county roads and bridges: driver's license fees and motor vehicle licensing taxes and registration fees. All counties also receive a percentage of the trust income from the Alabama Trust Fund, and some of these dollars can be directed to roads and bridges.



Protecting Alabamians' Investment



\$387,000,000,000

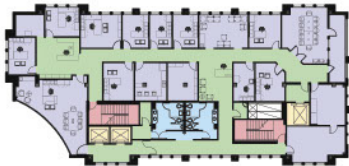
Total Value of Road and Bridge Infrastructure in Alabama

What is the single largest capital investment citizens in this state have made? The answer is Alabama's network of roads and bridges, according to Justice Smyth from the Alabama Transportation Institute.

Taken altogether, the 213,127 miles of roadways and 15,954 bridges are a large and incredibly valuable asset, built by earlier generations of Alabamians.

However, the current annual investment equals less than 0.5 percent of the asset's current cost, Smyth said.

"For most people, your biggest investment is your house. If I've got a leaky roof, and I don't do anything to replace that roof or repair that roof, it's eventually going to get worse and worse and worse until I've got water everywhere from a bad rainstorm," Smyth said. On the other hand, "if I reinvest money into my largest asset, it only protects and preserves that value — so we can't not do anything to address the issues for the transportation network."



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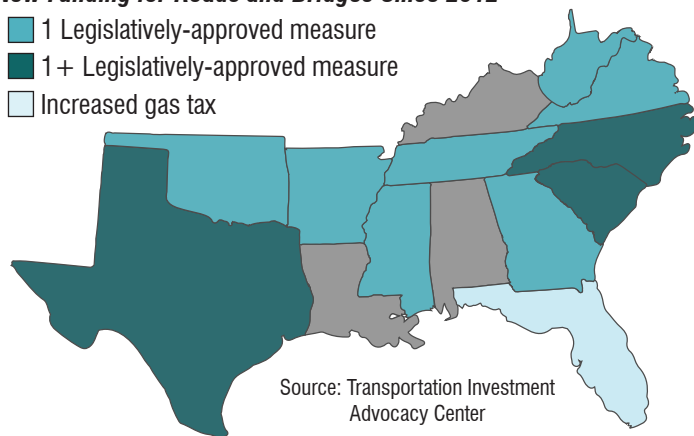
Most States Investing in Road and Bridge Infrastructure

Since 2012, 37 state legislatures have voted to boost funding for roads and bridges. In more than a dozen of these states, legislators have passed more than one infrastructure funding mechanism.

The trend holds steady among Alabama's neighbors in the southeastern United States. In fact, Alabama is surrounded on three sides by states where lawmakers have voted to increase funding for roads and bridges.

New Funding for Roads and Bridges Since 2012

- 1 Legislatively-approved measure
- 1+ Legislatively-approved measure
- Increased gas tax



Strong Earmarks Ensure Gas Tax Spent on Roads and Bridges

Alabama's system of roads and bridges is a \$387 billion investment, and over the years, state leaders have been very careful to ensure that the system's funding could not be diverted for other purposes.

Generally speaking, gas tax revenues can only be used for construction, improvement, maintenance and supervision of highways, bridges and streets.

But there are additional and more specific earmarks that apply to some proceeds that make sure the spending is balanced across a range of expenses. Some dollars can only be used for resurfacing, restoration and rehabilitation of paved county roads.



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Get to Know: County Road and Bridge Departments in Alabama

In Alabama, the road system is one of county government's biggest responsibilities. Most county commissions delegate the day-to-day operations and administration to a specific department under the leadership of the county engineer. This arm of the county commission is most commonly known as the Road and Bridge Department or the Highway Department.

Qualifications for County Engineer

- Registered professional engineer in Alabama
- Minimum 3 years of experience in the maintenance and construction of roads and bridges

More Than Roads and Bridges Department duties also include:

- Mowing grass and cutting brush along roadways
- Managing access to the county right-of-way for driveways and utilities
- Maintaining traffic control signs
- Cleaning ditches
- Administering subdivision regulations (where enacted)
- Removing disaster debris from the right-of-way



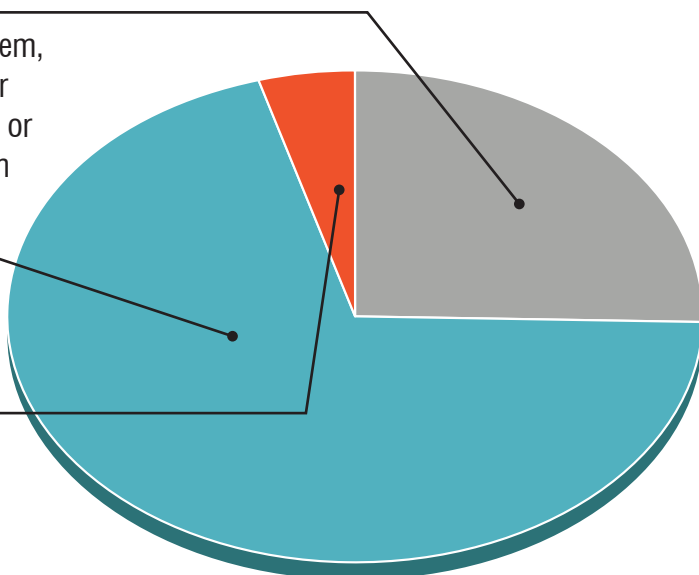
Inadequate funding has made it impossible for counties to properly repair and replace bridges. Weight-restricted bridges can force long detours for school buses, emergency responders and routine traffic essential to forestry and agriculture.

Unit System or District System? Three basic structures for road system management:

17 counties use the district system, in which each county commissioner supervises roads and bridges in his or her district. Each district has its own road crew and equipment.

47 counties use the unit system with operations organized for the county as a whole.

3 counties use a modified unit system, a hybrid of the unit and district methods.





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Average County in Alabama

About 900 miles of county roads, roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ of them paved

Around 130 county bridges

At least 50 of those bridges are 50 years old or older, making them overdue for replacement or rehabilitation

Infrastructure Funding

- ➔ County roads and bridges are funded through a combination of federal, state and local sources. Local sources typically require legislative authorization.
- ➔ County roads and bridges are heavily dependent on the county share of state fuel taxes.
- ➔ Funding is strictly earmarked for road and bridge construction and maintenance.
- ➔ Federal dollars often require a 20% match.

Road Trip



Want to visit one of the longest bridges in the world?

The roundtrip driving distance from Fort Payne, Ala., to the 24-mile Lake Pontchartrain Causeway outside New Orleans is about 900 miles, the same length as the average county road system in Alabama.

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Rallying Support for County Roads and Bridges

DRIVE Alabama is a coalition of community leaders, elected officials and everyday citizens who are committed to developing a transportation and infrastructure vision that will meet the state's 21st century mobility needs. The coalition was the brainchild of Alabama's 67 county engineers, who recognized the urgent need to educate the public about the current state of county roads and bridges.



www.DRIVEAlabama.org



@DriveAlabama



DRIVE Alabama

County Innovations

County Road and Bridge Departments have a long track record of implementing innovative solutions to enhance public services, save money or save time.

- Jackson County is using a technique called hydro-demolition to repair the deck of the county's longest and tallest bridge rather than rebuilding from scratch. A new bridge was estimated at \$10 million, but the repair is projected to cost less than half a million dollars.
- Marshall County turned to high-tech materials on a recent bridge replacement, utilizing geosynthetic reinforced soil abutments and an integrated bridge system. The old structure was removed and replaced in less than 60 days.
- Dissatisfied with costly and time-consuming training options available, Alabama counties worked together to create a training program for motor grader operators. Expert operators from Alabama counties serve as instructors. In its first year, more than a dozen sessions were conducted, and 90 county employees were trained, all for less than \$10,000.
- The County Joint Bid Program is a long-running example of counties working together to solve a universal problem. Using counties' combined buying power, the cooperative purchasing program has driven down prices for heavy equipment and reaped savings on herbicides, road sign materials and metal pipe. In the last decade, the program expanded to services, with the addition of pre-disaster contracts for storm debris removal.



The Alabama Motor Grader Training Program is nationally recognized, earning a 2018 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties.

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GETTING READY FOR GOAT HILL



2019 ACCA DISTRICT MEETINGS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17

Montgomery Marriott Prattville
Hotel at Capitol Hill
Prattville, Ala.
Elmore County

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29

The Venue at Coosa Landing
Gadsden, Ala.
Etowah County

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24

Grove Hill Senior Center
Grove Hill, Ala.
Clarke County

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Eutaw Activity Center
Eutaw, Ala.
Greene County

MONDAY, JANUARY 28

Lakeshore Inn
Double Springs, Ala.
Winston County

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7

National Security Conference Center
Elba, Ala.
Coffee County

- Register at www.alabamacounties.org
- Registration fee (\$20) covers your meal.
- All meetings are 6-8 p.m. Choose the one that best fits your schedule.
- County elected officials and staff leaders are encouraged to attend.
- Questions? Call the ACCA office (334-263-7594) and ask for Jennifer Datcher.



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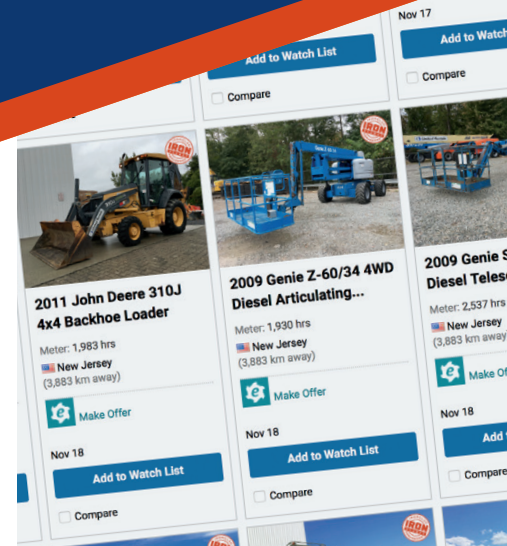
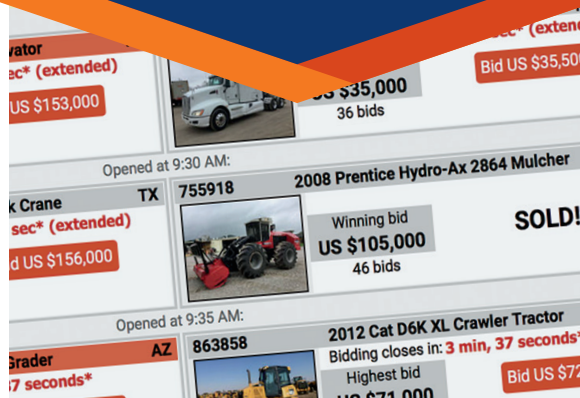
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•ACCA• 2019 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 2019

- 16-17 ALGTI: Media Relations and the Open Meetings Law
- 17-18 ALGTI: Ethical and Legal Issues
- 17 District Meeting in Elmore County
- 24 District Meeting in Clarke County
- 28 District Meeting in Winston County
- 29 District Meeting in Etowah County
- 30-31 CGEI: Personnel Administration
- 30-31 AJTA: Policy

FEBRUARY 2019

- 5 District Meeting in Greene County
- 7 District Meeting in Coffee County
- 20-21 CGEI: Legislative and Governmental Relations
- 20-21 CGEI CROAA: Legal Considerations

MARCH 2019

- 2-6 NACo Legislative Conference at the Washington Hilton in Washington, DC
- 5 First day of the Legislative Session
- 20-21 ALGTI: Roads and Bridges
- 21-22 ALGTI: Personnel Administration
- 27-28 AJTA: Officer Responsibilities and Offender Supervision
- 27 ACCA County Day #1

APRIL 2019

- 3-4 CGEI: Finance and Revenue
- 10 ACCA County Day #2
- 11 SIDP: Safety Coordinator & Public Officials/ AS&S Training in Clanton, AL
- 14-18 NACE Annual Meeting/Management & Technical Conference in Wichita, Kansas
- 17 ACCA County Day #3
- 24-25 ALGTI: Financial Administration
- 25-26 ALGTI: Understanding the Liability of the County Commission

MAY 2019

- 1 ACCA County Day #4
- 7-8 Engineers Annual Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL
- 8-9 Administrators Annual Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL
- 16 SIDP: Safety Coordinator & Public Officials/ AS&S Training in Cullman, AL
- 22 ACCA County Day #5
- 29 AJTA: Inmate Management

JUNE 2019

- 5 ACCA County Day #6
- 6 SIDP: Safety Coordinator & Public Officials/ AS&S Training in Evergreen, AL
- 11-13 Alabama Disaster Preparedness Conference in Prattville, AL
- 12-13 CGEI: Ethics
- 14-19 NENA Conference & Expo at the Gaylord Palms in Orlando, FL
- 17 105th Day of the Legislative Session
- 19-20 ALGTI: 49th Alabama County Government Institute
- 26-27 AJTA: Searches and Use of Force

JULY 2019

- 12-13 NACo Annual Conference at the Bally's Las Vegas Hotel in Las Vegas, NV

AUGUST 2019

- 20-22 ACCA 91st Annual Convention at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL

SEPTEMBER 2019

- 11-12 AJTA: Corrections Law
- 25-26 CGEI: Grant Writing

OCTOBER 2019

- 9-10 CGEI: Overview of County Government
- 9-10 CGEI CROAA: Business Licenses
- 16-17 AJTA: Mental Health
- 30-31 CGEI: General Management and Supervision
- 30-31 CGEI: Fundamentals of the Emergency Communications District

NOVEMBER 2019

- 13-14 AJTA: Officer Responsibilities and Offender Supervision

DECEMBER 2019

- 4-5 ACCA Annual Legislative Conference at The Hotel at Auburn University in Auburn, AL





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Voices from the County Family



From your point of view, why is it critically important to address the “Silent Crisis” of crumbling county roads and bridges?



David Smyth *Crenshaw County*
First Vice President, Association of
County Administrators of Alabama

A Crenshaw County is extremely grateful for the ATRIP & RAMP programs, but we are still in desperate need of another program of this magnitude for our local infrastructure. We have replaced numerous bridges that were unsafe for our citizens and our children on school buses; however, we still have depreciating farm-to-market roads that need immediate attention.



DeAndrae Kimbrough *Perry County*
President, Association of County
Engineers of Alabama

A Infrastructure funding is an issue of safety — of life and death. The conditions of county roads and bridges and the lack of funding to maintain them cannot be overemphasized. County Highway

In general, paved roads are said to have a 15-year lifespan, and this chip seal road is dangerously deteriorated after about 25 years of use. This section of Lawrence County 173 is just outside the county seat and serves 39 homes, a plant nursery and land used to produce row crops, cattle and timber. Photo: Lawrence County

Departments have gone above and beyond to provide safe and efficient travel conditions for the public — including lowering speed limits on distressed roads, closing bridges that are no longer functional and even reclaiming paved roads to gravel roads. These temporary measures are no longer safe or acceptable for county government.



Bob Franklin *Russell County*
President, Alabama Association of
Emergency Managers

A Local roads and bridges are critical to the safety of our residents, and we've got to take good care of these infrastructure lifelines. The maintenance of ditches and culverts, although commonly overlooked by the general public and

seemingly simple, is costly and time-consuming yet necessary to prevent emergencies. If we receive a heavy rain and were unable to properly remove debris in advance, roads become washed out.



Gordon Sandlin *Cullman County*
President, Alabama Association
of 9-1-1 Districts

A 9-1-1 personnel answer thousands of calls per day, and each one usually requires the response of an emergency agency. As county roads and bridges deteriorate, this can contribute to more accidents. Also, response times to and from scenes are slowed, which hampers the effectiveness of medical care, along with putting first responders

in jeopardy. A well-funded road maintenance program in each county is a necessity for public safety.



Kimberly Creech *Baldwin County*
President, County Revenue Officers
Association of Alabama

A All counties in Alabama must pick and choose which roads and bridges can be repaired and maintained. Over the years, motor fuel funding has decreased due to the increased fuel efficiency of new vehicles. Countless roads and bridges are in desperate need of repair or replacement, but the funding is simply insufficient. The constant battle for County Finance Directors in Alabama is to determine which roads and which bridges can receive a portion of the attention they need.



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Thursday, Jan. 31st thru Saturday, Feb 2nd • Dothan, Alabama

19th Annual Springtime Contractors' Equipment & Trucks Public Auction
Wednesday, Mar. 20th thru Thursday, Mar. 21st • Philadelphia, Mississippi

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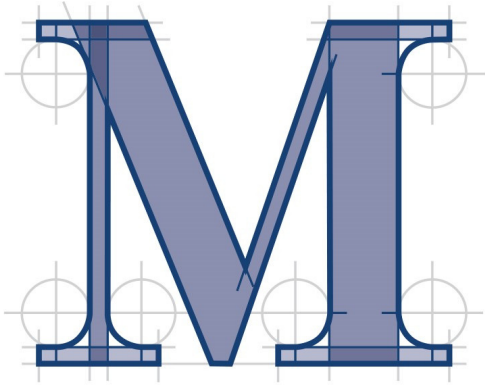
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