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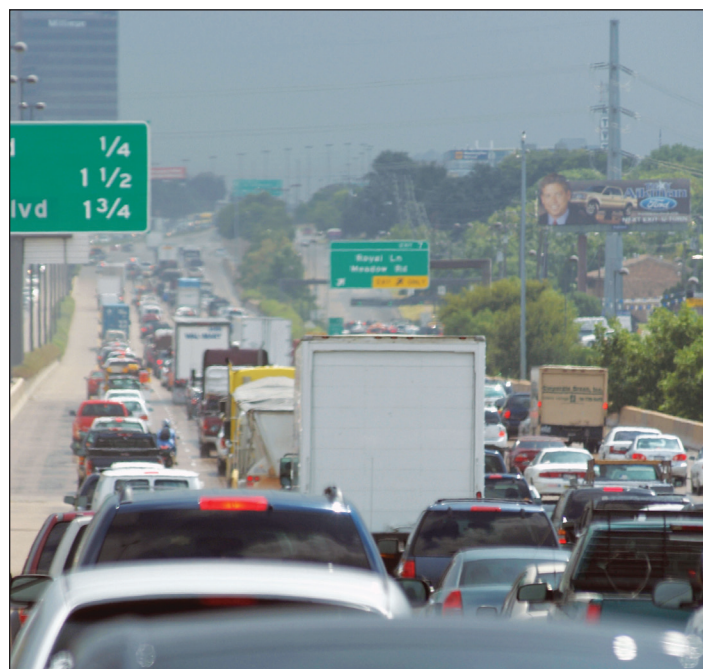
INCONSISTENT TRAFFIC CONDITIONS FORCING TEXAS COMMUTERS TO ALLOW EVEN MORE EXTRA TIME

Traffic congestion levels in Texas were relatively unchanged from 2011 to 2012, but traffic conditions are becoming less consistent from day to day, meaning that commuters need to plan even more extra time to ensure on-time arrival, according to an annual nationwide study.

The 2012 Urban Mobility Report, published by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute is prepared in partnership with INRIX, a leading private-sector provider of travel time information for both commuters and shippers. The combination produces a thorough and detailed illustration of traffic problems in 498 U.S. urban areas, including ten in Texas.

Region	Freeway Planning Time Index	2011 Hours of Delay per Auto Commuter	2011 Congestion Cost per Auto Commuter
Austin	4.26	44	\$ 930
Beaumont	1.90	25	531
Brownsville	1.46	25	565
Corpus Christi	1.44	14	287
Dallas-Fort Worth	4.00	45	957
El Paso	3.37	32	688
Houston	3.67	52	1,090
Laredo	2.07	19	418
McAllen	3.01	28	599
San Antonio	2.91	38	787

The eroding reliability of travel conditions is illustrated by the Planning Time Index (PTI), which measures the amount of extra time needed to arrive on time for higher priority events, such as an airline departure, just-in-time shipments, medical appointments or important social commitments. If the PTI for a particular trip is 3.00, a traveler would allow 60 minutes for a trip that typically takes 20 minutes when traffic is flowing freely. PTIs on freeways vary widely across the state, from 1.44 (about 13 extra minutes for a trip normally taking 30 minutes) in Corpus Christi, to 4.26 (a little more than two hours for that same half-hour trip) in Austin.



Texas congestion totals:

- 472 million extra hours of travel time
- \$10.1 billion in total delay and fuel costs
- \$2.1 billion in truck freight moving costs (value of delayed shipments is not included in this amount)



Along with the Texas Department of Transportation's 100 Most Congested Roadways list, the Urban Mobility Report illustrates how growing traffic problems threaten the state's economy and future prosperity. In response to those problems, the Texas Legislature in 2011 directed TTI to help TxDOT and local agencies advance the state's highest priority road projects and explore the most viable funding options for those projects.

Highlights from the research illustrate the effects of the nation's traffic problems:

- The amount of delay endured by the average commuter was 38 hours, up from 16 hours in 1982.
- The cost of congestion is more than \$120 billion, nearly \$820 for every commuter in the U.S.
- "Rush hour" is six hours of not rushing anywhere.
- Congestion is becoming a bigger problem outside of "rush hour," with about 40 percent of the delay occurring in the mid-day and overnight hours, creating an increasingly serious problem for businesses that rely on efficient production and deliveries.

"If you invest in roads and transit, you get better service and access to more jobs," says Tim Lomax, one of the study's authors. "Traffic management and demand management should be part of the mix, too. Generally speaking, mobility investments in congested areas have a high return rate."

Researchers recommend a balanced and diversified approach to reducing traffic congestion – one that focuses on more of everything. Their strategies include:

- Get as much use as possible out of the transportation system we have.
- Add roadway and public transportation capacity in the places where it is needed most.
- Change our patterns, employing ideas like ridesharing and flexible work times to avoid traditional "rush hours."
- Provide more choices, such as alternate routes, telecommuting and toll lanes for faster and more reliable trips.
- Diversify land development patterns, to make walking, biking and mass transit more practical.
- Adopt realistic expectations, recognizing for instance that large urban areas are going to be congested, but they don't have to stay that way all day long.

The complete report, including individual data for all major urban areas, is available at <http://mobility.tamu.edu/>

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