Fighting for Better Roads in the Bay Area

March 2015

The Bay Area's local street and road network comprises nearly 43,000 lane miles of roadway across nine counties and 101 cities. If this network were to be completely rebuilt, it would cost more than $65 billion. These roadways are vital to the region's livability and economic health and provide access to jobs, homes, schools, shopping and recreation. Regular maintenance is essential to sustain the network in a state of good repair.

The condition of pavement on the Bay Area's local streets and roads is fair at best. Only six cities have pavement in very good condition, a score of 80 or higher out of a possible 100 points (see page 4). The region's average pavement condition index (PCI) score is 66, close to the tipping point where pavement starts to rapidly deteriorate and repair costs begin to soar.

Bay Area cities and counties have placed a strong emphasis on cost effective, early maintenance to prevent roadways from reaching the point that expensive, full-depth reconstruction is needed.

While there are a few local success stories, funding constraints have limited the ability of cities and counties to maintain proper street maintenance. Without significant new revenues, localities are certainly not able to restore the Bay Area's local street and road network to "good" condition.

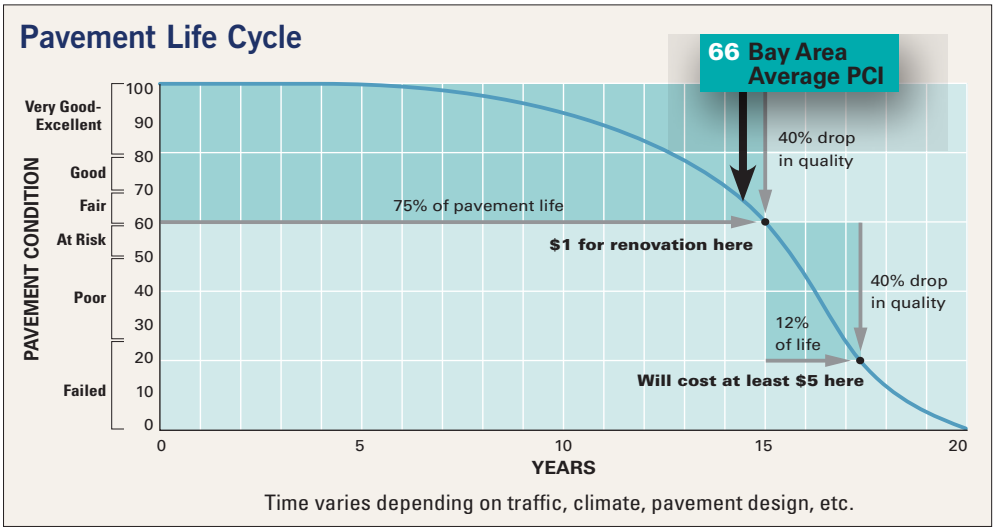
Scenario	Annual Funding (2014 Dollars)	2040 Roadway Condition
Current Funding Levels	$285 million (+0%)	45 ("Poor")
Maintain Current Conditions	$628 million (+220%)	66 ("At Risk")
Improve All Roads to "Good" Condition	$875 million (+307%)	75 ("Good")

Kari Neilsen

To meet the Plan Bay Area target of restoring pavement to "good" condition (PCI of 75), the region will need to more than triple current maintenance expenditures to $875 million annually through 2035.

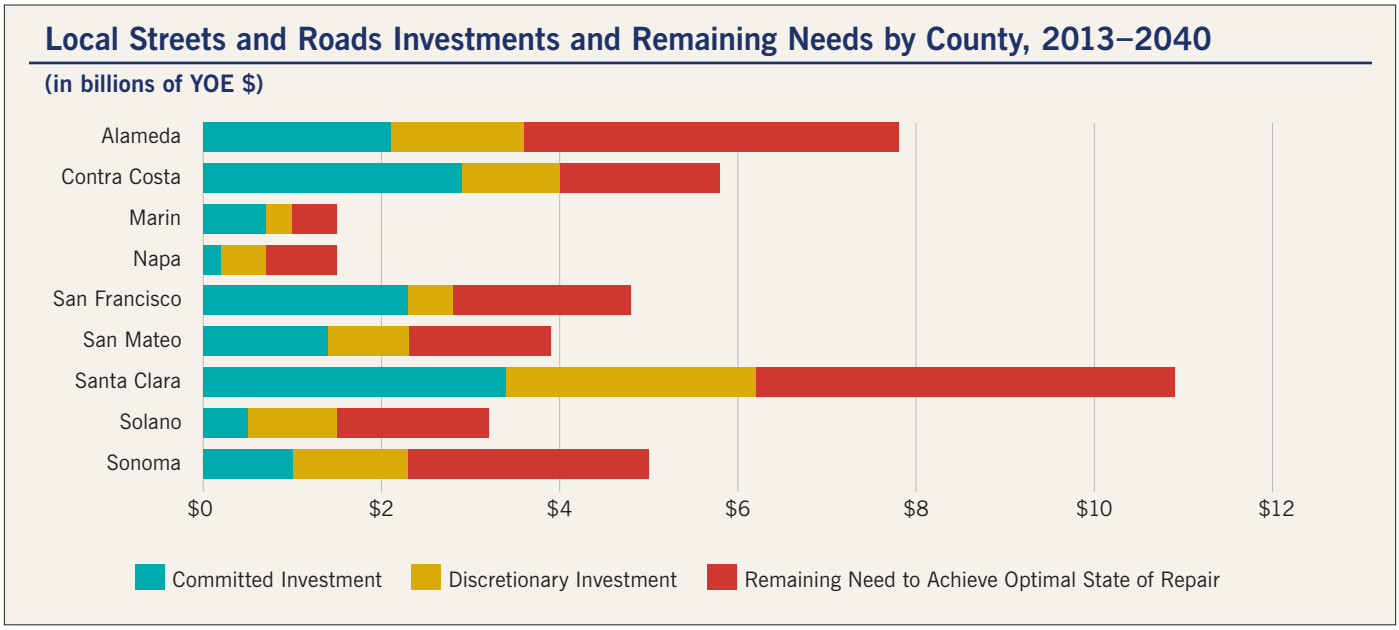
The High Cost of Roadway Neglect

Over 15 years, a new pavement surface typically will deteriorate from a PCI of 100 ("excellent") to a PCI of 60 ("fair"). But once the PCI falls to 60, even a two- or three-year deferment of maintenance can turn a $20,000 resurfacing treatment into a $100,000 reconstruction project.



Roadway Maintenance and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

High quality pavement and timely maintenance play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions as well. Early maintenance produces fewer carbon emissions than extensive reconstruction projects, and smoother surfaces result in better fuel efficiency for vehicles using the road. The National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) concluded that rough and poorly maintained roads can increase fuel consumption by up to 12 percent and can increase maintenance costs by hundreds of dollars per year. The NCHRP estimates that nationally, rough roads cost consumers billions of dollars in additional fuel and maintenance every year.



BAY AREA CASE STUDIES: Successes, Challenges and Opportunities

EL CERRITO: Building on Success — "Fair" to "Excellent" in Five Years

El Cerrito voters in 2008 approved a half-cent sales tax to finance a Street Improvement Program and by 2010 the Contra Costa County city had raised its three-year moving average PCI score to 62 ("Fair") from 53 ("At Risk") in 2006. In the five years since, El Cerrito has raised its three-year moving average PCI to 84 ("Very Good/Excellent"), ranking third among all Bay Area jurisdictions.

MORAGA: Measure K Kicks Into Action

Moraga provides another example of how a small community can harness strong voter support to spur quick improvements in local pavement conditions. In 2012, some 70 percent of voters in the Contra Costa County town approved Measure K, which provides a full cent on each dollar of taxable sales for pavement repair and rehabilitation, and for storm drain repair. Moraga used the new sales tax revenue stream to support a bond issue that generated nearly $8 million over three years for the town's pavement management program. The revenue helped the town to repave 106 separate roadway segments in the first year, which boosted the one-year PCI score on Moraga's 110 lane-miles of local streets to 58 in 2013 from just 50 the year before.

SOLANO COUNTY: Steady Work Brings Steady Improvement

Roads in unincorporated Solano County have experienced a gradual and steady increase in PCI, lifting the county's index from 61 to 78 over the last seven years. County staff credits an aggressive chip seal program for the average 3.6 percent annual PCI increase. Every year, nearly half of Solano County's 460 centerline miles of paved roads are physically inspected and 40 miles are identified for chip seal

El Cerrito streets have had a major makeover, funded in part by revenues from a voter-approved sales tax.

in the Capital Improvement Plan. County crews spend about three months each spring preparing the selected road segments by digging out failed pavement sections, blade patching and crack sealing. Crews have successfully addressed structural distresses in advance of the surface treatment and paid equal attention to maintaining smooth profiles.

SAN FRANCISCO: Measure B Leads to Better Roads

San Francisco voters in 2011 approved a $248 million Road Repaving and Street Safety Bond, allowing the city over a three-year period to repave streets, make safety-focused improvements for all modes of transportation and repair deteriorating bridges. The bond proceeds augmented existing local transportation funding and have a spurred an increase in the city's average PCI score to 67 from 65 two years ago, reversing a decade of slow decline.

(Continued on next page)

BAY AREA CASE STUDIES (continued)

NAPA COUNTY: Roads to Get 99 Percent of Funds from Voter-Approved Tax Measure

Napa County voters in 2012 approved Measure T, a 25-year "self-help" transportation tax that will take effect in 2018. This is expected to yield a total direct investment of some $400 million for roads in unincorporated portions of Napa County and streets in the county's five cities. Measure T directs 99 percent of the funds for roadway repair and does not allow jurisdictions that use the money to reduce their own contributions to pavement management.

SONOMA COUNTY: Moving Closer to a Sales Tax Measure to Support Local Road Needs

Sonoma County's large road network and comparatively small population put the county at a disadvantage when it comes to formula-based distributions of road funding that prioritize population over lane miles. The county's major arterials and collectors are the only roads eligible for federal funds, resulting in these roads remaining in good condition while the residential roads that comprise nearly two-thirds of the county network and rely exclusively on local funding are in notably poorer shape. Nearly half the local roads in Sonoma County are rated "Very Poor." County Supervisors over the last three years have worked to address the chronic funding shortfall by investing millions of additional general fund dollars for pavement maintenance. The Board also is developing plans for a quarter-cent general sales tax measure that could go on the ballot as early as 2016 and largely would be used to finance road repairs and pavement preservation by all jurisdictions within the county.

For more information on the Bay Area's battle for better pavement visit mtc.ca.gov/news/street-fight/

Pavement Condition Index (PCI)

Very Good-Excellent (PCI = 80-100)	Pavements are newly constructed or resurfaced and have few if any signs of distress.
Good (PCI = 70-79)	Pavements require mostly preventive maintenance and have only low levels of distress, such as minor cracks or spalling, which occurs when the top layer of asphalt begins to peel or flake off as a result of water permeation.
Fair (PCI = 60-69)	Pavements at the low end of this range have significant levels of distress and may require a combination of rehabilitation and preventive maintenance to keep them from deteriorating rapidly.
At Risk (PCI = 50-59)	Pavements are deteriorated and require immediate attention including rehabilitative work. Ride quality is significantly inferior to better pavement categories.
Poor (PCI = 25-49)	Pavements have extensive amounts of distress and require major rehabilitation or reconstruction. Pavements in this category affect the speed and flow of traffic significantly.
Failed (PCI = 0-24)	Pavements need reconstruction and are extremely rough and difficult to drive.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

tel:510.817.5700
fax: 510.817.5848
web: www.mtc.ca.gov

Contacts

Randy Rentschler
Director, Legislation and Public Affairs
email: rrentschler@mtc.ca.gov
tel: 510.817.5780

Rebecca Long
Senior Legislative Analyst
Legislation and Public Affairs
email: rlong@mtc.ca.gov
tel: 510.817.5889