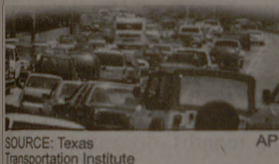


Study finds traffic congestion getting worse

Longest commutes

Los Angeles commuters lead the nation in the amount of extra travel time to and from work because of traffic.

CITIES	EXTRA HOURS PER YEAR
Los Angeles	90
San Francisco	68
Denver	64
Miami	63
Chicago	61
Phoenix	61
San Jose, Calif.	60
Boston	58
Washington, D.C.	58
Portland, Ore.	58



SOURCE: Texas Transportation Institute

By Jennifer C. Kerr
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — If it seems like more of your time is spent stuck in traffic, you may be right. In cities large and small, the daily struggle with bumper-to-bumper traffic is getting worse.

The average rush-hour driver wasted more than a full day — about 26 hours — sitting in traffic in 2001, according to an annual report released Tuesday by the Texas Transportation Institute at Texas A&M University. That's an increase of four hours in the last five years.

The price tag: \$69.5 billion in wasted time and gas, said the study, which looked at 75 urban areas.

"Congestion extends to more time of the day, more

roads, affects more of the travel and creates more extra travel time than in the past," the study said.

The report found that the average rush-hour driver in Los Angeles spent about 90 hours waiting in traffic in 2001, far more than anywhere else.

The San Francisco-Oakland area was next at 68 hours, followed by Denver (64), Miami (63) and Chicago and Phoenix, which tied for fifth (61).

Tim Lomax, the study's co-author, said public transportation, traffic signals on freeway entrance ramps and other congestion-busting measures have kept a bad situation from getting even worse. For example, traffic signal coordination aimed at smoothing the flow of cars, trucks and buses saved commuters 16 million hours, the report said.

The study found some areas

of the country where gridlock eased. The average delay dropped for commuters in San Antonio; Fresno, Calif.; and Pensacola, Fla.

Still, more improvements are needed, the report said. Among the recommendations: more roads to handle increased demand, additional bus and car pool lanes, and adjusted work hours for commuters.

In response to criticism about its earlier studies, the institute for the first time factored in improvements that cities are making, such as traffic light coordination and ramp metering, as well as the benefits of public transportation, Lomax said.

Data from the Federal Highway Administration and information from various state and local agencies was analyzed by the researchers to come up with the rankings.

Agreement

Continued from page 1

"Everybody's working real hard and making some progress. I don't know that we're going to get it done this week, but I hope we get it done during this session."

Texas Republicans want to send more members of their party to Congress. They say the state's voting trends are solidly GOP and that the 32-member congressional delegation should reflect that. Democrats, who hold a 17-15 advantage in the delegation, want to keep existing districts.

House Speaker Tom Craddick, a Midland native, has been adamant about creating a district that would give his hometown of Midland its own congressman. But, Sen. Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock, opposes a separate district for Midland because it likely would eliminate agricultural representation from his region in Congress. Duncan heads the Senate's arm of the conference committee.

Boeing

Continued from page 1

projects, Lund said. "There is some interest in future years to potentially involve students from the Mays Business School," Lund said.

Lund said he believes similar cross-department and cross-college projects could become a valuable learning tool for stu-

dents at A&M.

Boeing sponsored a similar project at the University of Missouri-Rolla. In May, Boeing donated \$215,000 to the university to help fund a new Product Innovation and Creativity Center.

"In an interdisciplinary environment, students will work in teams on open-ended, real-life projects," said UMR chancellor Gary Thomas.

Through this program, faculty and students will learn how to operate effectively in complex multi-disciplinary environments and develop a strong understanding of the implications of engineering and business decisions in the overall spectrum, Lund said.

"It is our hope that graduates from this program are recognized for the skills they develop," Lund said.

Sharon

Continued from page 1

with 18,000 residents, the second-largest West Bank settlement — is politically tough for Sharon, who draws much of his support from settlers and their backers.

Sharon himself avoided discussing the issue in detail until Monday, when he said that Ariel would be included and that "if we reach a point where the matter once again creates a dispute, we will sit with the Americans again."

In an apparent attempt to dampen criticism, the proposal to be brought before the Cabinet leaves gaps throughout the barrier "at least for the time being," said Sharon adviser Zalman

Shoval, adding that the idea was discussed with U.S. officials.

The United States sees the barrier as possibly defining an eventual border. If Ariel is encircled and put on the "Israeli" side, it would imply that Israel plans to pre-empt negotiations and annex that part of the West Bank. Leaving a gap implies flexibility over the final border and might deflect U.S. criticism, at least for now.

The gaps would be filled in with "security obstacles" including patrols by soldiers "to make it as impenetrable as possible," he said. Shaviro said the gaps would also be policed with electronic sensors and motion detectors.

If attackers make it through the gaps, Israel might close off the barrier completely, Shoval said.

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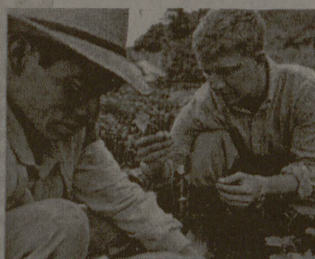


• Wednesday, Oct. 8, 5:30 to 6:45 p.m. Info Meeting, MSC Room 230

• Thursday, Oct. 9, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Career Fair, MSC Flagroom

• Thursday, Oct. 9, 7 to 8:15 p.m. MSC, Room 229

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Society of Women Engineers

General Meeting

When: Wed., October 1st

Time: 6:45 p.m.

Where: RICH 114

Speaker: N1

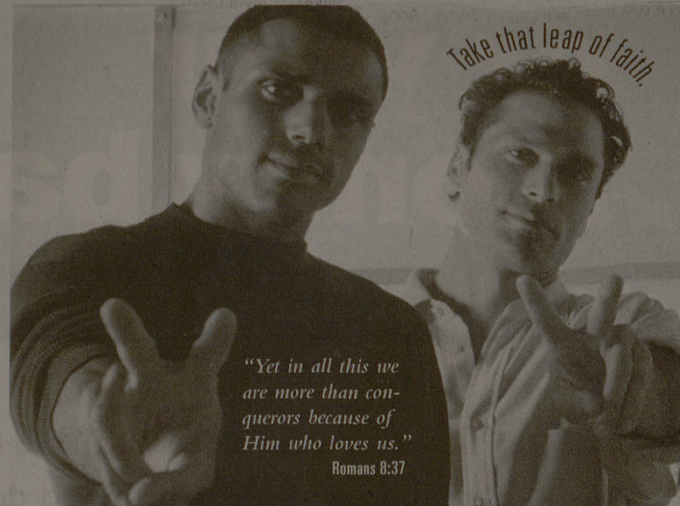
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