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Contractors Identify City's 10 Worst Roads and Bridges

By *BAO ONG*

Keith Meyers/The New York Times A 2005 view of the Kosciuszko Bridge from Calvary Cemetery in Queens, looking toward Manhattan. The bridge has been rated one of the city's worst.

Underneath the Major Deegan Expressway in the Bronx, with its rusted columns and pock-marked surface, a major trade association on Wednesday released its list of the worst roads and bridges in New York City.

"The bridges and roads all have varying states of deteriorating conditions — whether it's poor pavement or falling concrete," said Denise Richardson, managing director of the [General Contractors Association of New York](#). "There's a need for the state to make systematic investments in the road and bridge program."

The association, which handles many of the city's largest projects, pored through an annual report that the New York State Department of Transportation released earlier this year to develop its list. Researchers looked at the city's bridges and freeways that were given "red flags" — for everything from weak columns to uneven pavement — to compile the list, which included only those operated by the state.

The association announced the following rankings:

- Kosciuszko Bridge
- Gowanus Expressway
- Bronx River Parkway over the Amtrak tracks
- Cross Bronx Expressway viaduct over the Amtrak tracks and the Sheridan Expressway
- Bronx Terminal viaduct carrying the Major Deegan Expressway by Yankee Stadium
- Major Deegan Expressway over Sedgwick Avenue and the Metro-North Railroad tracks
- Bruckner Expressway Service road, northbound
- Bruckner Boulevard viaduct
- 150th Street over the Belt Parkway
- Major Deegan Expressway ramp to 153rd Street/Cromwell Avenue, southbound

Ms. Richardson said, "Our point isn't that the bridges are not safe or creating havoc." But, she said, with Congress still debating how much federal funding to allocate to states for transportation and to state lawmakers about to earmark funds, she hoped lawmakers

would make financing infrastructure projects a priority.

New York ranks low – 43rd out of 50 – for its poor road conditions, according to a study that the [American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials](#) released in June. Connecticut and New Jersey follow at 44th and 50th.

Nationally, more than a quarter of bridges are deemed structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, the [American Society of Civil Engineers](#) reported earlier this year.

That's no surprise to Robert E. Paaswell, the director of the [University Transportation Research Center](#) at the City University of New York and a former executive director of the Chicago Transit Authority.

“Every structure has a certain lifetime,” said Mr. Paaswell, who on Wednesday was named interim president of the City College of New York. “You can only run vehicles over these bridges and freeways over a period of time before the wear and tear builds up.”

Of the Gowanus Expressway in Brooklyn, Mr. Paaswell said, “It has been a problem with us for the last dozen years.” Built more than 50 years ago, the road has rusted beams supporting it and crumbling pavement in some parts.

Ms. Richardson, who lives in Jackson Heights, Queens, said she understood how construction projects could be a hassle for drivers whenever she crossed the Kosciuszko Bridge. But she added, “It's always easier to fix a small problem than letting it get bigger.”