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## S.A. traffic could be worse — no, really

[By George Zarazua](#) - Express-News

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Think San Antonio roads are badly congested? Think again.

A new Texas Department of Transportation study shows nine of the Top 10 most-congested roads in the state are in Houston or Dallas-Fort Worth. The last one is in Austin.

So where does Bexar County stand? Well, our most congested roadway ranks 23rd on the list — and it isn't U.S. 281 north of Loop 1604.

The most congested road in Bexar County, according to the study released Wednesday, is Loop 1604 between Bandera and Culebra roads.

“That bears out what we've been claiming all along, that congestion is relative, and when you compare congestion in San Antonio — except for a couple of spots like 281 North — versus Dallas, Houston and Austin, that's kind of what I expected to see,” said Scott Ericksen, a spokesman for the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Harris County has the most congested roads, with 35 in the Top 100, followed by Dallas County with 24. Bexar has 11, just surpassing Tarrant and Travis counties with 10 each.

The updated list of the state's 100 most-clogged roadways was issued to meet a 2009 legislative mandate. The first list was released last year.

Chris Lippincott, a TxDOT spokesman, said a new methodology was used to compile this year's list.

“The reality is we needed to have a more accurate tool for measurement, and the Texas Transportation Institute was able to provide that,” Lippincott said.

# Bexar County's busiest roads

A Texas Department of Transportation study released Wednesday reveals Bexar has 11 of the 100 most congested roads in the state.



Rank	Road	From road	To road
23	Loop 1604	Bandera Road	Culebra Road
38	U.S. 281	Loop 1604	Comal county line
48	I-35	U.S. 90	U.S. 281
49	I-35	Loop 1604	Comal county line
50	Culebra Road	Grissom Road	Loop 410
56	Wurzbach	Military Highway	Loop 410
62	I-35	Loop 410	Loop 1604
75	Castroville Road	Texas 151	SW 19th Street
81	Fredericksburg Road	Loop 410	I-10
94	Loop 410	U.S. 281	I-35
96	Basse Road	Naco Perrin Blvd.	U.S. 281

Source: Texas Tribune web site

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He said actual traffic speed data from a private company, Washington-based INRIX, was used to calculate delays rather than rely on estimates based on traffic count totals.

Lippincott said the rankings also are now compiled based on traffic volume throughout the day, not just during rush hours and other times of peak congestion.

The information is intended to help transportation planners prioritize roadway and transit projects as funding for new highway construction decreases. According to state projections, the gas-tax-fueled highway fund is projected to run out of money for new projects in 2012.

Ericksen said most of the 11 Bexar roads that made the state's list are already on the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Mobility 2035 long-range road improvement plans.

“That's a good sign that we're going down the right track,” he said.

Some of the roads, such as U.S. 281 North between Redland and Marshall roads, are already being improved to relieve congestion.

Others such as Loop 1604 between Bandera and Culebra roads are scheduled for improvements beginning next year. In May, the MPO agreed to spend \$2.37 million to fund the Loop 1604 “superstreet” project.

Lippincott said while TxDOT does bring attention to the state's most-clogged roads, the agency “is under no impression that the state can build its way out of congestion.”

“We cannot pour concrete fast enough to solve metropolitan congestion problems with highway capacity alone,” he said. “Mass transit will be important, as well as high-occupancy lanes, toll lanes.”

He also said motorists and their employers can help by staggering work times and telecommuting.

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