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Dallas Streets Need \$900 Million in Repairs

By Ken Kalthoff | Monday, Feb 24, 2014 | Updated 11:59 PM CST

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Dallas city leaders learned it would take \$900 million to repair city streets and reach a goal of 87 percent satisfactory streets, a goal set in 2006.

Ben Russell, NBC 5 News

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Dallas roadways need \$900 million worth of work to reach the satisfaction level City Council members prescribed in 2006, according to a briefing for the Dallas City Council Transportation Committee on Monday.

The 2006 goal was to make 87 percent of Dallas streets meet satisfactory-level rating in accordance with the city's grading system.

"I think 87 percent satisfactory is barely passing, so I don't think it should be any less than 87 percent, especially for safety and the well being of the citizens of Dallas," driver Lisa Matter said.

Currently just 82 percent of streets citywide are satisfactory. That percentage is expected to decline to 73 percent by 2017 under current maintenance funding, according to city officials.

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Dallas drivers already strategically navigate around potholes on certain streets.

“It’s a difficult ride and you go back and forth between the lanes and it’s almost difficult at times depending how large the pot hole is,” Matter said.

“You’ve just got to watch the person in front of you because he might see the hole before you do,” said Lawrence Fields, who drives a truck in

Dallas.

Street maintenance has recently become less of a priority at Dallas City Hall.

“And they let everybody know, ‘we did tell you this three or four years ago and you all didn’t listen,’ and now it’s going to cost us more money,” Council member Tennell Atkins said.

Disrepair is greater in some parts of the city. The lowest satisfactory rate is 75 percent in Northeast Dallas Council District 9, which includes older parts of the city near White Rock Lake.

“We’re trying to keep them safe, and get rid of the pot holes but they don’t last and eventually we’re going to be spending more money than if we replaced the roads,” said Dalls Council District 9 representative Sheffie Kadane.

Solutions offered by city staff Monday included finding the money to improve roads or reducing the satisfaction goal.

Kadane said reducing the goal is unacceptable.

“That looks real bad on the City of Dallas. No, we’re going to try to get them fixed,” Kadane said.

City Council members said they have heard complaints from voters. In response, City Council is prepared to increase maintenance funds in a 2014 budget this fall, and has prepared a public improvement bond referendum for voter approval.

A bond issue is required for the large capital investment to reconstruct roads that are beyond repair.

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