

The Public's View of Infrastructure

OVERVIEW

Progress made in some areas, others in major need of attention

The Annual Infrastructure Consumer Report Card is based on a public opinion survey and tracking data commissioned by Mass Insight Corporation and conducted by Opinion Dynamics Corp. in 2004. The data are compared to the results of similar surveys conducted since 1993. This information offers insight into the perception of Massachusetts residents of the quality of the state's water infrastructure and the condition of its roads and bridges.

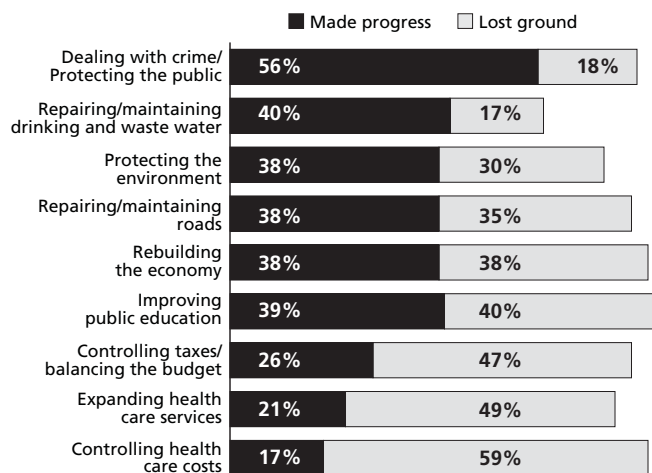
Key Findings

- Massachusetts residents say the state faces significant needs in transportation, i.e. roads, bridges, transit.
- The public sees progress in the water and wastewater infrastructure, but recognizes that there is still work to be done.
- While consumers acknowledge the importance of infrastructure and transportation systems and the need for more investment, few indicate an appetite for additional tolls, taxes or fees of any size.

Overall, most residents feel the state has made some gains, and have a positive view of the state agencies managing infrastructure.

Progress on infrastructure issues ranks higher than health care

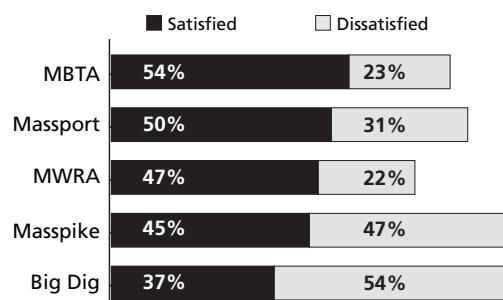
How has the state government done in the past couple of years on:



When asked where state government has made the most progress in the past couple of years, infrastructure issues ranked higher than health care and controlling taxes.

General support for state infrastructure agencies

Resident satisfaction with management of:



The MBTA and Massport generated the most support from consumers of the infrastructure-related state agencies.

Infrastructure Facts

Estimates of the gap between available funds and the needs of water infrastructure over the next 20 years amount to more than 20 percent of the state's entire annual budget.

More than half of Massachusetts' roads are in poor or mediocre condition and slightly over half of its bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Needs

U.S.*

Drinking Water Facilities Needs	\$120 billion
Wastewater Facilities Needs	\$102 billion

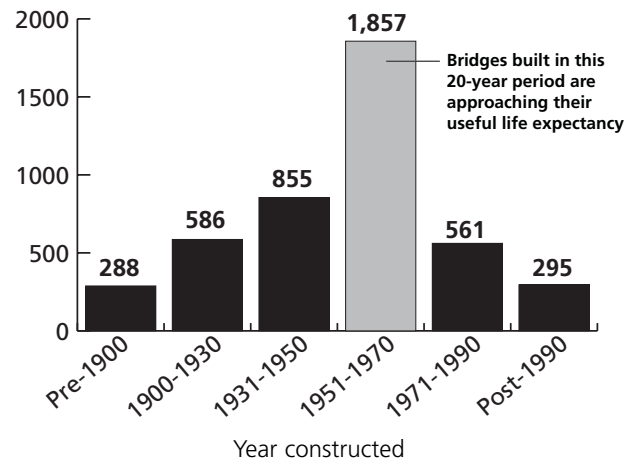
Massachusetts**

Drinking Water Needs	\$5.87 billion
Wastewater Needs	\$4.65 billion

*Source: US EPA Clean Water and Drinking Water Gap Analysis, September 2002

**Source: US EPA 1999 Infrastructure Needs Surveys

Bridge problems: 61% of all bridges are more than 43 years old



Source: MA EOTC

Since 1989 Mass Insight has provided its corporate and institutional clients with unique quarterly public opinion survey reports on issues including education, infrastructure, health care, jobs, water quality, and local, state and federal elections.

The following is a select set of infrastructure data from its 2004 infrastructure survey and tracking data from a similar 1993 survey.



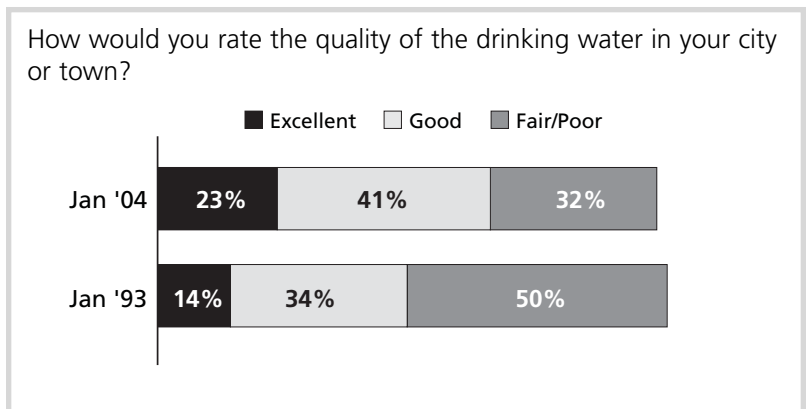
WATER

By a 54 percent to 33 percent margin, residents rate the state's water infrastructure excellent/good over fair/poor, a significant turnaround from the 1993 ratings of 27 percent excellent/good and 64 percent fair/poor, an indication that residents view the state as having made strides on water quality issues in terms of both drinking and recreational water.

Even with the gains made in the last decade, people said they are willing to pay a little, though not a lot, more for water quality, as water investments affect personal and environmental health.

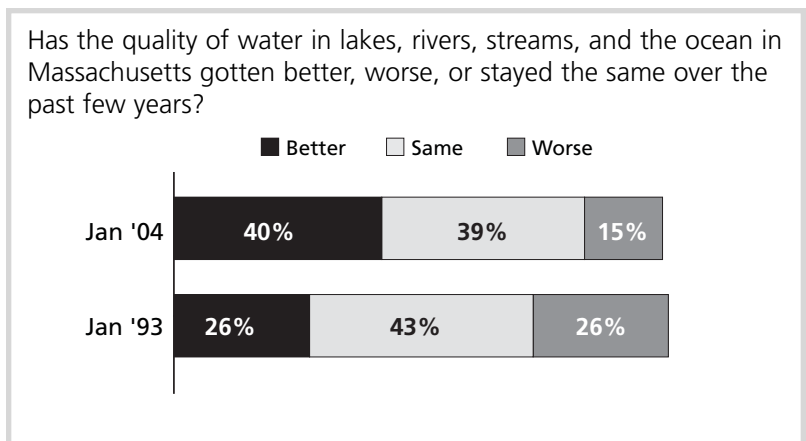
Drinking water gets high marks

- More than six in ten Massachusetts residents perceive the quality of drinking water as good or excellent, up from 48 percent in 1993.



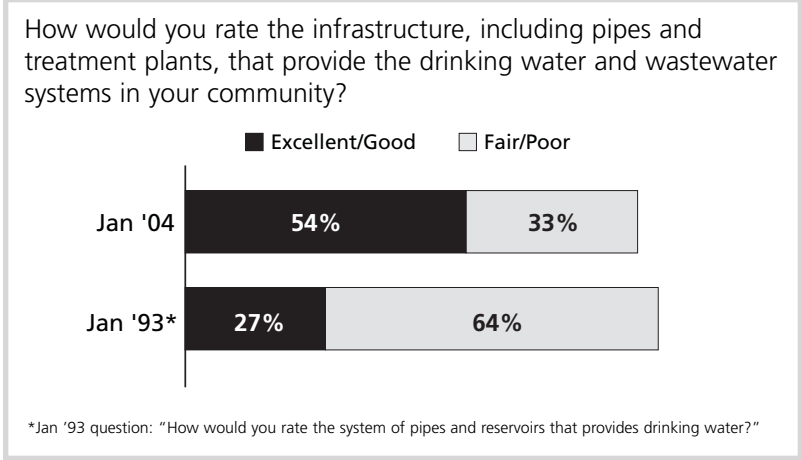
No More "Dirty Water"

- Statewide, consumers recognize the improvements made in the quality of recreational waters.
- In 1993, residents were equally divided over improvement or decline in the quality of lakes, rivers, and ocean.
- In 2004, more than 2.5 times the number of respondents perceives waters as having improved versus those who see a decline.



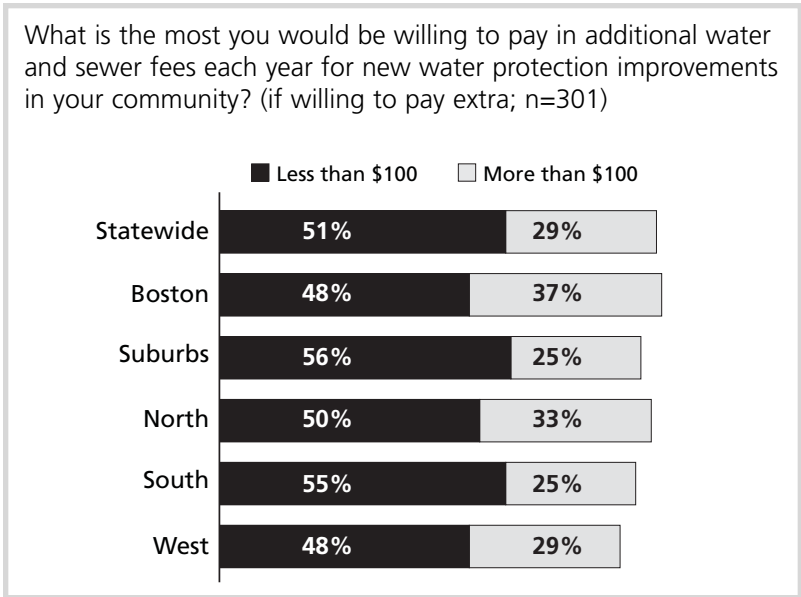
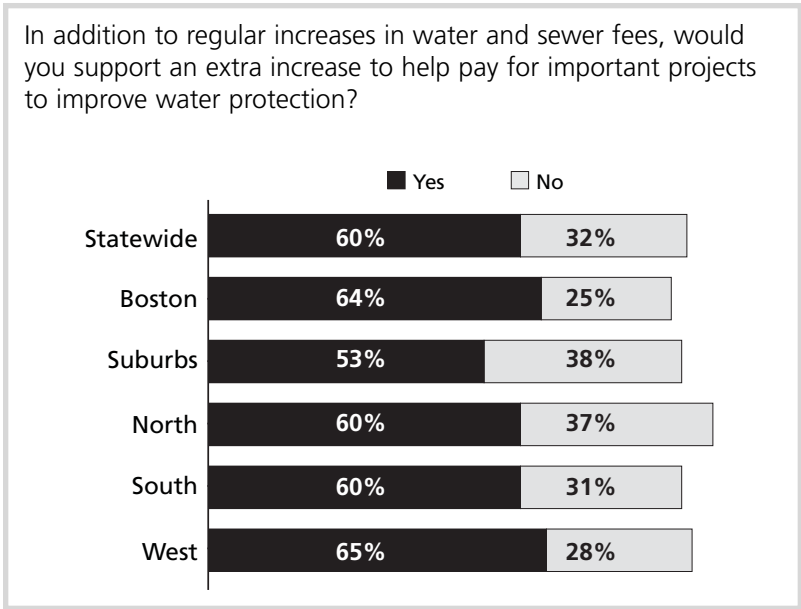
State gets credit for maintenance and improvements in infrastructure

- More than twice as many respondents in 2004 than in 1993 note that the state has made progress more than has lost ground in repairing and maintaining drinking water and wastewater systems.



Water quality a priority to pay for

- More than 60 percent of respondents would pay more to ensure important water protection projects are completed.
- When asked if they would pay a premium above their current sewer bills, approximately half of those who answered yes would pay up to \$100 per year. But, there is little support for more.





TRANSPORTATION

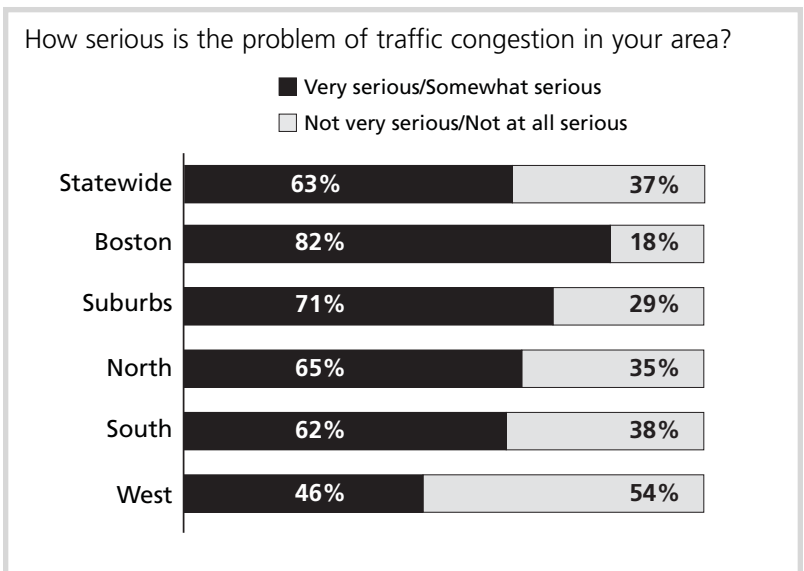
Almost six in ten Massachusetts residents use cars to get to and from work or to drive children to school.

Sixty-three percent of the public thinks traffic congestion is a very serious or somewhat serious problem; 82 percent in Boston; 71 percent in the Greater Boston suburbs.

However, most residents are unwilling to pay much, if anything, to fund high priority transportation projects in their region — just 12 percent would be willing to pay more than \$100.

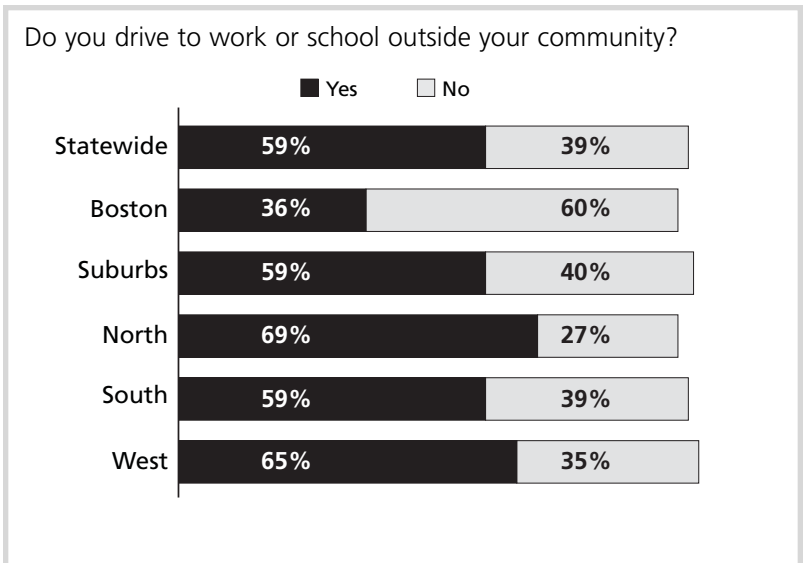
Residents say traffic congestion is a major problem in Massachusetts

- Sixty three percent of residents view traffic congestion as a serious problem. Only in western Massachusetts do more than half of the respondents feel that traffic is not very serious or not at all serious.
- Bostonians more than other residents consider congestion very or somewhat serious.



Massachusetts is a state of drivers

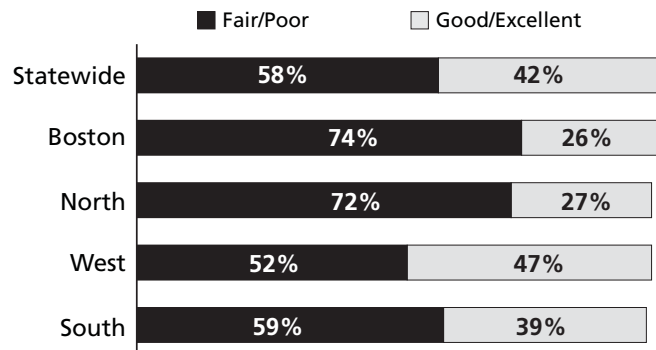
- Six in ten respondents drive to work beyond their communities. Of them, more than half view traffic as a daily problem.



Roads and bridges need attention

- *In contrast to the public's perception of water infrastructure, where aging equipment and plants are not visible, more residents feel that roads and bridges are in critical need of repair. Fifty-eight percent view the condition of roads and bridges as fair or poor.*

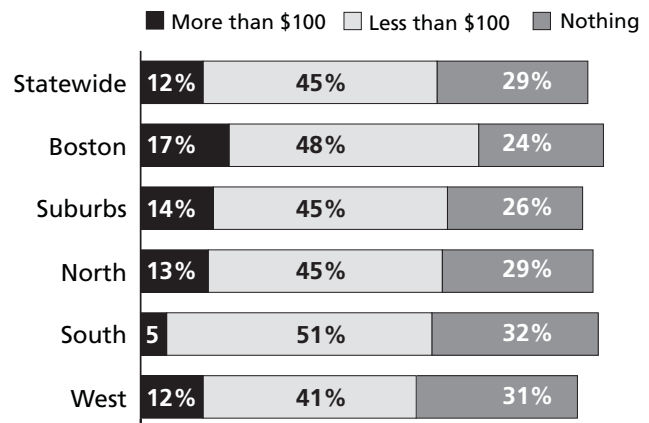
On a scale of excellent, good, only fair, and poor, how would you rate the condition of the roads and bridges in your area?



Limited support for new fees

- *Many residents indicated frustration with traffic problems and see a real need for investment in roads and bridges. They have, however, little appetite for greater contributions through tolls or other fees to help pay for improvements.*
- *Even in areas where residents suffer most from traffic congestion and poor road conditions — Boston and the northern part of the state — a majority of respondents would pay nothing or less than \$100 to improve the situation.*

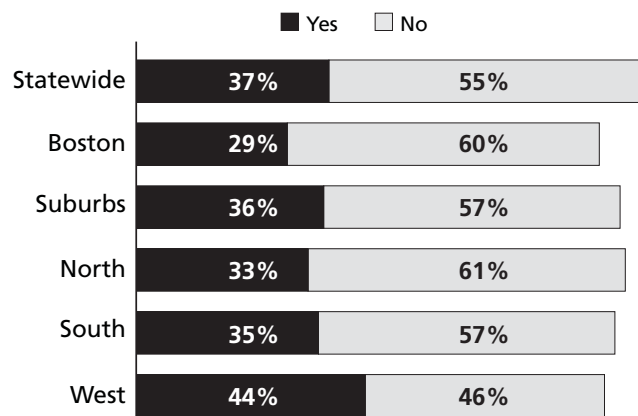
State officials have identified a number of high priority road, bridge, and mass transit projects in every region of the state. Many of these projects are not currently funded. How much would you be willing to pay in additional tolls or gas taxes each year to complete high priority road, bridge and mass transit projects in your region?



Little support for dedicated lanes

- *Fewer than half, 37 percent, of respondents indicated interest in allowing drivers to pay more to use a dedicated lane. Again, respondents in areas that are most impacted by traffic congestion and poor roads show the least support for dedicated lanes.*

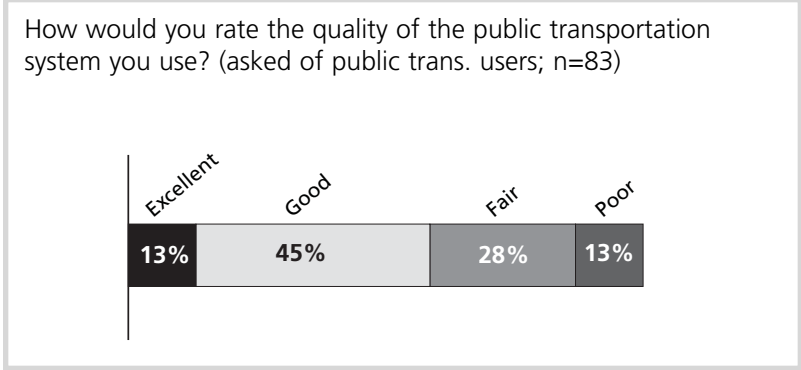
Would you support setting aside lanes on major highways that drivers can only use if they are willing to pay a separate or increased fee in order to help pay for necessary road and bridge improvements?



'T' riders express satisfaction

- *Of the respondents who use public transportation regularly, almost 60 percent view the system as good or excellent.*

This remains consistent with the public's perception of the management of the MBTA, which has a 54 percent satisfaction rate.



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