

HOW SHOULD THE MEASURES AND RANKINGS BE INTERPRETED?

Most of the measures presented in the report address roadway systems. While the problems and solutions are not solely focused on roads, much of the data that are available relate to roads and vehicle travel. This year's report also includes operational improvement information and public transportation data at an area wide level. While this expands the scope of the data and measures, the effect of these strategies is often at a corridor or activity center area level where they are applied. So, while the road statistics may provide a picture of urban mobility levels, the addition of the public transportation data and operational treatment effects improve the usefulness of the comparisons.

On the "solution" side of the measures, the current database and methodology include roadway lanes, public transportation and traffic volumes for the database years, and statistics on a few operational improvements for 2007 through 2010. Most larger urban areas are expanding their use of these improvements and are also increasing the data and evaluation studies. The methodologies and more detailed description of estimating the mobility effect of the operational solutions and public transportation service is also investigated in a separate report also on the Urban Mobility Report website.

The estimates are not a replacement, a substitute or a better method of evaluating these strategies at the corridor or project level. The estimates included in this report are a way to understand the comparative mobility contributions of various strategies using a consistent methodology.

Another key manifestation of uncertainty is the ranking of the measures. Estimating the measures creates one set of variations—the "real" measure could be higher or lower—and the relatively close spacing of the measures mean that the rankings should be considered as an indication of the range within which the true measure lies. There are many instances where one or two hours of delay or one or two index points could move an urban area several ranking spots.

Rankings, whether with or without the operational improvements or public transportation service, should be examined by comparing the values for cities with similar population, density, geography or other key elements. The rankings of values with strategies are available for only the most recent year, and the performance measures are presented for mobility levels with and without the strategy contributions.