Keeping the Roads Safe at Indiana University

©Chris Meyer

Jordyn Wade, Davee’ Carter, Dakota Roach, David Devine
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Executive Summary

Introduction: We are a group of students from Indiana University currently enrolled in English W231. We are creating a report to address the lack of attention to the infrastructure here at Indiana University, specifically the road conditions. In this report, we will map out the problem, the solution and the cost and benefits of repairing the roads at Indiana University.

Overview: Whether you are a student, teacher, faculty member, or guest here at the IU campus, you’ve experienced what it’s like to drive on the roads. Students and faculty that drive these roads consistently expect they will be decent given the price they pay through fees and taxes but, this isn’t the reality. There is a problem with these roads, however and my group has conducted research and formulated a plan to solve this issue. We are going to provide a plan to the Capital Planning and Facilities Department.

Problem: If you have ever driven through campus at Indiana University, you know how beautiful it is with the limestone buildings, the architecture, and the ever-changing trees. Everywhere you look, the scenery is breathtaking. Meanwhile, the road conditions are breathtaking for the wrong reasons. We have potholes, uneven pavement and rough railroad tracks. When you add all of these issues together it equals damaged vehicles. At night, it can be hard to see where potholes are located, which can throw the car out of alignment. IU spends large amounts of money to make sure the campus looks great, but not the roads. If there is an issue with the roads addressed, they are typically just a patch job, which will only solve the issue for a short period of time. We’re here to map out a plan to solve this issue for the long term. This
report will dive deeper into the issue and our plan to resolve it which will include the time and money necessary to start a solution to IU’s ever-increasing road issues.

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**Introduction**

We are a group of students from Indiana University, currently enrolled in English W231, and we’re writing this report to map out a solution to a problem here on our campus. We found that the current road conditions here at Indiana University do not meet the standards set by the school. They are continually breaking down and causing damage to the vehicles and buses. The poor condition of the roads also takes away from the appearance of this beautiful campus. We have mapped out a plan to restructure the school’s budget in order to pay for the repairs and have created a timeline in which this plan could be accomplished. We have included charts and graphs to represent the cost and time needed to accomplish our goal. Then, we will wrap up the report with a conclusion restating the material covered in the report.

**Problem in detail**

Poor road conditions cost drivers billions of dollars each year in repairs (109 billion in 2015 according to CNBC). In a 2017 Infrastructure Report Card, it states that driving on roads in need of repair cost the average driver 272 dollars a year in Indiana. This statistic shows that this is an issue that needs addressed, especially on the IU campus. This is an important issue for Indiana University since they use buses to transport students around campus. These poor road conditions cause damage to the buses costing the school more money from the budget originally allotted.
Students are charged a 65-dollar transportation fee to cover any costs related to the bus system. Take that cost times the estimated 40,000 students and we get a revenue of 2.6 million dollars. This money can cover things like fixing roads, lights, and bus maintenance. In the Indiana University 2018-2019 Official Budget report, IU is stated to receive a little over 1.1 billion dollars. We believe some of that money can be worked into a budget to resolve the poor road conditions on the IU campus.

Method/Scope

For the solutions and conclusions that are laid out in this report, we used a variety of research methods. To get feedback from people that actually drive the roads and know first-hand what that experience is like, we made a survey through survey monkey. We provided six questions with short answers to gather students’ opinions on the roads. We asked mostly students from the University to take part in this survey. The findings will be discussed in the solutions. The limitations of this survey is that it is a little bias because we only get the opinion of one population, young college students that drive on campus. We were also curious to see how much
of the money paid to the school from tuition is already going to fixing problems like road repair. Our group looked up an annual budget report from Indiana University the, coming from the year 2017. It showed how the expenses that the student pays the school gets split up and used. However, it wasn’t specific to what repair the money counted toward. This one fee likely goes to a load of other things besides the roads. It doesn’t break down how much of the repair fee that is charged goes to road construction.

We also looked up how much extra trouble and money it costed students through things like damages to cars and crashes caused by road construction. The frequency of road and road closures was another problem that we wanted to address going alone with the faulty roads around campus. We researched how often this occurred and tried to pinpoint how much time this added on to commutes. The research does not tell the whole story however. The damages could have been cause by other issues besides the fact that the roads are not well maintained. It could be reasons like college students being reckless. A limit in our research is that we did not get any feedback or perspective from faculty. Our research mainly focused on students and the implications they face.

**Solutions**

We believe that longevity, cost and time are the biggest factors in determining feasibility of our project. The value of a car declines immediately after it leaves a car lot. Cars also go through wear and tear of driving long distances and accidents. We believe that the longevity of cars is shortened by the poor roads on our campus. Solving the problem by fixing the roads would inevitably give our cars a longer lifespan. The appearance would also be a benefit. Our
campus is beautiful, and we want to enhance its beauty. Having smooth roads to drive on would be enjoyable to everyone that comes through or visits our campus. The total cost of our project has many factors. The final cost will include the price per pothole (approximately $35 to $50), and there may be an initial mobilization cost of about $100 to $150 to bring trucks and crew out to the repair site. Size of potholes as well as materials used can also affect the repair cost. The timeline for our project varies. It may take up to a month depending on how long each road takes and any complications that may arise. We plan to have this project completed in the summer when there isn’t as much traffic as a regular day or weekend during a semester.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion we think it would be beneficial to our campus if the roads were repaired. The city, state, or county charged with maintaining the road where you live could be held responsible for any damages due to potholes. Because it is the government’s job to maintain the roads, the government is also responsible for any damage that results when roads aren't kept
reasonably safe. The key here is what is considered "reasonable." The government won't always
be responsible simply because your vehicle was damaged by the questionable condition of a
road. The campus must take responsibility and fix what the government doesn’t think needs
fixing. Cars can easily be damaged because of potholes or shoulder drop offs. For our cars to last
longer, we must maintain the roads here on campus. Also maintaining the roads will make the
campus less liable for any damages to a person’s car because of the poor conditions. Along with
the longevity of your car, you also get a nicer looking campus. Not only are the potholes a
nuisance to cars, but they are also unpleasing to the eye. Here at Indiana University, we have a
beautiful campus. Having a nicer road would bring everything together full circle. The cost of
fixing the potholes we have here on campus won’t be as costly as repaving every single road.
Since we suggest this project take place over the summer when there is less traffic on campus, it
should not take long. If the workers are diligent the project should go smooth.
Recommendations

- Repair the roads around campus by filling in cracks and potholes
- Maintain roads in your area by cleaning up garbage and debris
- Keeping roads maintained will improve overall safety
- Integrate regularly scheduled road cleanings and safety checks
- Incorporate storm damage and pollution control structure check and repair
- Keeping streets maintained as they deteriorate saves more money in the long run rather than waiting until the road is completely destroyed

Works Cited

"Central Authentication Service @ Indiana University." Indiana University Bloomington. Web.  


" Log in to your account ." SurveyMonkey: The Worldâs Most Popular Free Online Survey Tool .  
Web.


Image 1: https://www.thelocal.it/20180711/rome-residents-paint-potholes-after-womans-death

Image 2: https://cecascotland.co.uk/respect-our-roadworkers/

Image 3: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloomington,_Indiana

Appendix A

Online Survey
Question 1: How would you rate the road conditions at IU?
Answer: 1- very poor, 2- poor, 3- needs work, 4- good, 5- very good
The results showed an average rating of about a 1.8.

Question 2: Have the roads ever affected your ability to travel through campus?
Answer: Yes or No
The results of this survey show that 100% of participants answered Yes.

Question 3: Do you agree that the money we pay the University should go towards funding better road conditions?
Answer: Yes or No
The results of this question show that 100% of participants answered yes.

Question 4: Do you think IU could do a better job of keeping the roads nice?
Answer: Yes or No
The results show that 100% of people answered yes to this question

Question 5: Do you think road conditions around campus are affecting your car in a negative way?
Answer: Yes or No
The results of the survey show that 83% of people answered yes to this question and 17% answered no.

Appendix B

Indiana University Budget
For the informational visual used in this report of the IU 2017 Budget, we used the Indiana University 2017 Annual budget report. This is the table of the full budget laid out in their report. We used these values for the Bloomington Budget and turned them into percentages to show what the breakdown is of the things they spend money on currently.

![2017-18 Official Budget](image)

### 2017-18 Official Budget

**Allocations of Resources by Source – General Fund**

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<th>Source</th>
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<th>Employee Benefits</th>
<th>Financial Aid</th>
<th>Other Operating Expenses</th>
<th>Other Salaries and Wages</th>
<th>Staff Compensation</th>
<th>Transfers [R/D]</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Utilities</th>
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