

February 11, 2026

The Honorable Dan Zumbach, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
The Honorable Megan Jones, Chair, House Transportation Committee
Timothy McDermott, Director, Legislative Services Agency
Ground Floor, State Capitol Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: County Structurally Deficient Bridges Report for FY 2025

Pursuant to Iowa Code Section 307.32, the Iowa Department of Transportation respectfully submits the subject report summarizing the progress made during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 to reduce the number of Structurally Deficient (SD) county bridges in Iowa. Included with the report is “A Guide to the County Structurally Deficient Bridges Summary Report,” which provides background information, definitions, and other information related to the report.

Highlights from this year’s report include the following:

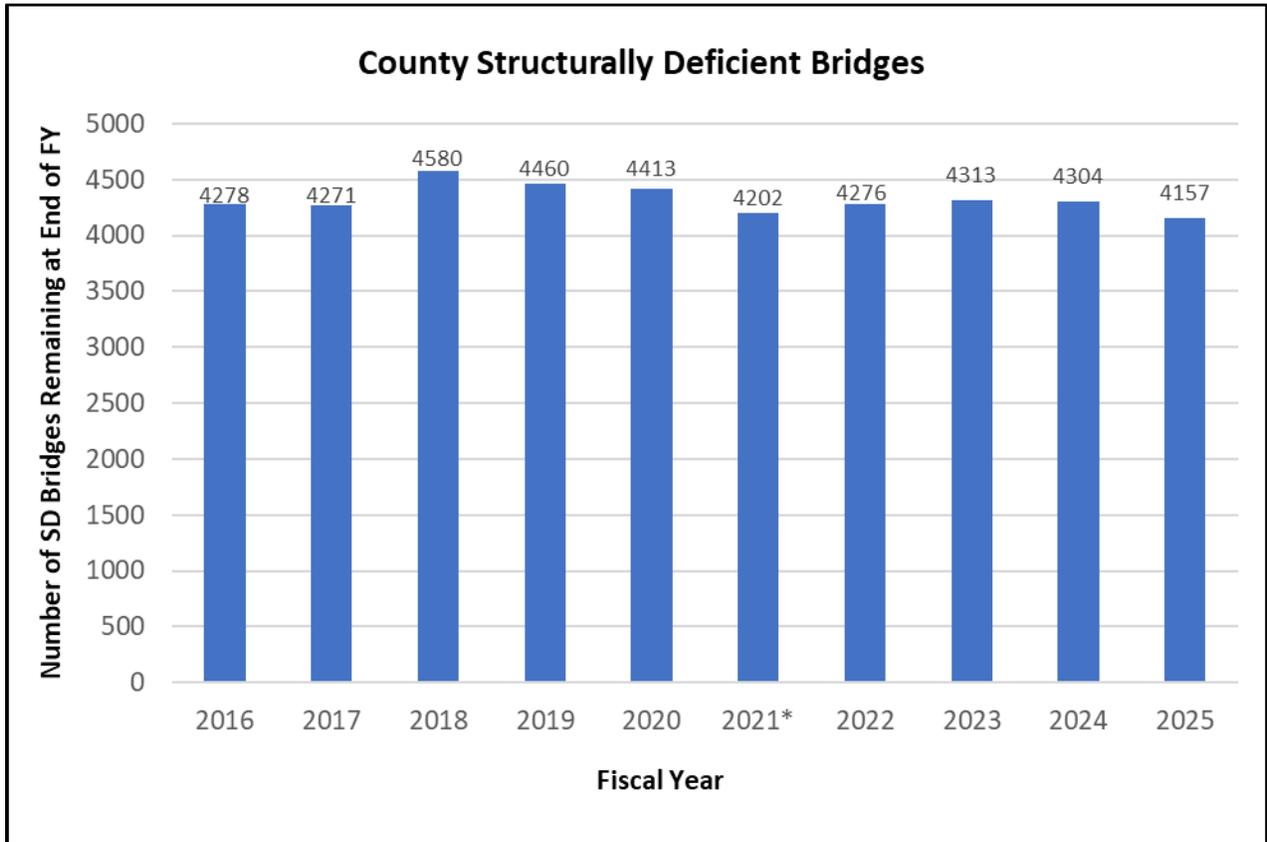
- At the beginning of the FY there were 4,304 SD county bridges.
- During the FY an additional 164 bridges became SD, resulting in a total of 4,468 SD bridges. Of the 4,468 SD bridges, 311 bridges were repaired or replaced to remove their SD status. **The final result was a net decrease of 147 SD bridges** to get to 4,157 SD county bridges at the end of FY’25.
- More detail on the status of existing SD county bridges (e.g. open vs. closed, programmed for improvement, etc.) can be found on the attached report. Please note that those bridge numbers in the “Structures that remained in SD status” columns are as of January 1, 2025, due to the reporting cycle of that information.

The number of SD county bridges had risen slightly in FY’22 and FY’23 and had decreased slightly during FY’24. In FY’25, the number of SD county bridges saw a notable decrease, indicating positive progress. FY’25 was a record year for county bridge expenditures since this report was initiated. While FY’23 and FY’24 bridge expenditures fell just short of FY’25, they still exceeded \$100 million in total. Of the \$106 million spent in FY’25, about \$25 million was from local county funding sources.

To help address funding challenges, counties have been cooperatively and aggressively pursuing additional federal competitive bridge funding opportunities. In FY’23, nine counties were awarded a \$24.76 million federal competitive RAISE grant for the replacement of large bridges. In FY’24, six counties were awarded a \$38.64 million federal competitive BIP grant for the replacement of six bridges and the removal of one bridge. In FY’25, seven counties applied for a \$25 million federal competitive BUILD grant to replace seven bridges and, although it was not awarded, they received a “Project of Merit” designation and will re-apply. Counties will continue to pursue other competitive grant opportunities to increase investment in county bridges and reduce the number of county SD bridges. In addition, a study documenting information on all historic bridges in Iowa is nearing completion and will result in faster development of upcoming bridge replacement projects.

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The chart below shows the trend of county SD bridges over the past several years.



*The number of Structurally Deficient bridges shown for 2021 is slightly different from what was reported in the FY'21 report due to a change in the federal definition. Additional information can be found in the attached guide.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Scott C. Marler, Director

County Structurally Deficient Bridges Summary Report - Fiscal Year 2025

In accordance with Iowa Code 309.22A, this report details the manner in which counties use their road use tax funds to replace or repair structurally deficient bridges.

County	Beginning Status		Structures that remained in SD status						Structures taken off SD status					Total SD Remaining at End of FY'25
	Carry over and newly designated SD		Official NBI Data 1/1/25	In Service (Open) - Still SD			Out of Service (Closed)		Bridges removed from structurally deficient status: restored to full legal load capacity					
	SD Reported at End of FY'24	Became SD During FY		Partially Rehabbed	Programmed for Replacement or Rehab	Not Yet Programmed	Closed: Programmed to Replace	Closed: Not Planned to Reopen	via Replacement	via Major Rehabilitation	via Light Rehabilitation	via Removal or Reinspection	Total Restored	
Adair	38	0	37	0	3	33	0	1	2	0	1	1	4	34
Adams	81	7	87	0	9	68	1	9	4	2	0	1	7	81
Allamakee	16	3	19	0	11	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Appanoose	56	0	53	0	16	32	5	0	2	0	0	2	4	52
Audubon	35	2	37	0	14	20	1	2	0	0	0	3	3	34
Benton	81	0	78	0	39	39	0	0	6	0	0	0	6	75
Black Hawk	23	2	25	0	17	4	2	2	2	1	3	0	6	19
Boone	40	1	39	0	7	30	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	39
Bremer	28	2	30	0	14	13	2	1	6	0	0	0	6	24
Buchanan	20	0	19	0	10	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Buena Vista	49	7	54	0	5	46	1	2	0	12	0	0	12	44
Butler	42	0	41	0	26	10	3	2	10	0	0	0	10	32
Calhoun	50	0	49	7	17	22	3	0	2	0	1	0	3	47
Carroll	16	0	16	0	7	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Cass	99	10	104	0	25	77	1	1	2	0	0	1	3	106
Cedar	58	1	59	0	13	44	1	1	2	0	0	1	3	56
Cerro Gordo	11	3	14	0	6	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Cherokee	66	1	62	0	18	38	4	2	5	0	0	0	5	62
Chickasaw	81	1	77	0	13	60	2	2	2	0	0	1	3	79
Clarke	53	4	54	0	16	31	2	5	1	0	0	0	1	56
Clay	15	1	16	0	4	10	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	16
Clayton	25	17	40	0	17	22	0	1	4	1	1	0	6	36
Clinton	7	2	9	0	6	1	2	0	2	0	1	0	3	6
Crawford	24	0	20	0	8	11	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	22
Dallas	11	1	11	0	5	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	12
Davis	42	1	43	0	10	31	1	1	6	0	3	6	15	28
Decatur	79	1	77	0	16	56	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	80
Delaware	18	1	19	0	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Des Moines	23	1	23	0	14	8	1	0	2	2	3	0	7	17
Dickinson	14	2	16	0	10	4	1	1	4	0	0	0	4	12
Dubuque	28	0	27	0	15	10	0	2	5	0	0	0	5	23
Emmet	13	1	14	0	3	9	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	14
Fayette	83	8	91	0	31	59	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	89
Floyd	30	0	28	0	15	11	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	30
Franklin	29	0	27	0	16	11	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	28
Fremont	34	0	34	0	6	25	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	33
Greene	25	1	26	0	9	17	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	25
Grundy	70	4	74	0	28	44	1	1	1	0	2	0	3	71
Guthrie	94	0	91	0	18	68	1	4	1	0	0	2	3	91
Hamilton	33	1	31	0	11	17	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	33
Hancock	28	1	26	0	11	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29
Hardin	65	6	69	0	17	49	3	0	2	3	0	0	5	66
Harrison	40	2	40	0	15	23	0	2	0	3	2	1	6	36
Henry	37	0	35	0	6	29	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	35
Howard	46	1	42	0	27	12	2	1	7	0	0	0	7	40
Humboldt	9	0	9	0	6	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	7
Ida	28	0	28	0	1	26	0	1	2	0	4	0	6	22
Iowa	46	4	49	0	9	37	1	2	5	0	0	0	5	45
Jackson	40	0	40	0	22	16	1	1	10	0	0	0	10	30
Jasper	110	0	107	0	37	60	2	8	4	0	0	0	4	106

County	Beginning Status		Structures that remained in SD status						Structures taken off SD status					Total SD Remaining at End of FY'25
	Carry over and newly designated SD		Official NBI Data 1/1/25	In Service (Open) - Still SD			Out of Service (Closed)		Bridges removed from structurally deficient status: restored to full legal load capacity					
	SD Reported at End of FY'24	Became SD During FY		Partially Rehabbed	Programmed for Replacement or Rehab	Not Yet Programmed	Closed: Programmed to Replace	Closed: Not Planned to Reopen	via Replacement	via Major Rehabilitation	via Light Rehabilitation	via Removal or Reinspection	Total Restored	
Jefferson	28	4	30	0	13	15	2	0	2	0	2	0	4	28
Johnson	24	0	20	0	12	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	24
Jones	8	2	10	0	5	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	10
Keokuk	35	1	36	0	13	22	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	36
Kossuth	44	0	40	0	14	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	44
Lee	22	1	23	0	14	8	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	22
Linn	16	6	18	0	15	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	20
Louisa	25	0	25	0	9	13	1	2	1	2	0	1	4	21
Lucas	65	1	65	0	6	52	0	7	0	0	0	4	4	62
Lyon	59	11	67	0	10	37	11	9	0	0	0	0	0	70
Madison	84	0	82	0	22	55	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	84
Mahaska	72	2	69	0	41	25	1	2	2	9	0	0	11	63
Marion	25	1	26	0	8	17	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	24
Marshall	127	2	126	0	14	110	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	127
Mills	35	0	35	0	6	27	0	2	2	0	0	2	4	31
Mitchell	16	0	16	0	6	8	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	15
Monona	40	2	39	0	10	24	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	42
Monroe	31	0	29	0	11	17	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	30
Montgomery	48	2	47	0	9	30	2	6	2	0	0	0	2	48
Muscatine	29	0	28	0	9	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29
O'Brien	12	6	16	0	6	10	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	16
Osceola	16	3	14	0	4	7	1	2	1	0	0	1	2	17
Page	60	0	56	0	9	43	1	3	4	0	0	1	5	55
Palo Alto	25	0	21	0	4	16	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	24
Plymouth	93	0	89	0	56	32	1	0	4	0	0	1	5	88
Pocahontas	50	2	51	0	12	27	5	7	5	0	0	0	5	47
Polk	22	0	19	0	9	6	3	1	3	0	0	0	3	19
Pottawattamie	40	3	39	0	32	6	0	1	3	0	0	0	3	40
Poweshiek	100	0	91	1	6	80	0	4	5	2	1	0	8	92
Ringgold	94	1	88	0	26	45	4	13	3	0	0	0	3	92
Sac	72	0	67	0	25	40	1	1	4	0	2	0	6	66
Scott	20	0	19	0	15	3	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	17
Shelby	20	0	19	0	9	7	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	19
Sioux	10	4	13	0	9	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	2	12
Story	39	0	37	0	15	16	0	6	2	0	0	0	2	37
Tama	114	1	106	0	4	90	0	12	6	0	0	0	6	109
Taylor	82	0	80	0	20	48	0	12	4	1	0	0	5	77
Union	54	1	54	0	11	32	2	9	7	0	0	0	7	48
Van Buren	49	3	49	0	12	35	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	52
Wapello	27	0	24	0	11	11	2	0	3	0	0	0	3	24
Warren	49	0	49	0	13	31	1	4	0	0	1	1	2	47
Washington	31	0	31	0	8	23	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	30
Wayne	30	1	31	0	13	15	2	1	2	0	2	0	4	27
Webster	38	1	39	0	20	17	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	38
Winnebago	17	0	15	0	15	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	14
Winneshiek	60	0	56	0	14	40	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	60
Woodbury	87	2	85	0	21	61	2	1	2	0	0	0	2	87
Worth	18	0	16	0	8	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	18
Wright	53	1	54	0	17	34	0	3	1	0	0	8	9	45
Totals	4304	164	4275	8	1354	2599	109	205	198	40	31	42	311	4157

SD Structures to account for: **4468**

Still open: **3961**

Closed: **314**

Restored: **311**

Still SD: **4157**

SD definition including only "Poor" bridges

Net Improvement: 147

A Guide to the County Structurally Deficient Bridges Summary Report

Prepared by the Iowa Department of Transportation

January 2026

Background

Except when more frequent inspection cycles are required or when less frequent inspection cycles are allowed due to low-risk characteristics of the structure, counties must inspect all bridges at least every 24 months for structural integrity and overall condition. Some counties inspect all of their bridges every other year while others inspect roughly one-half of their bridges each year.

In accordance with Iowa Code 309.22A, this report summarizes the manner in which counties used their road use tax funds, along with state and federal funds, to replace or repair structurally deficient bridges. Each year the county engineers submit this information to the Iowa DOT as part of the county annual report of road and bridge expenditures required by Iowa Code 309.22. Additionally, more detailed information is available from the Iowa DOT upon request.

What is a “structurally deficient” (SD) bridge?

A structurally deficient bridge is a bridge having deterioration, cracks, or other flaws that reduce its load carrying capacity. This classification does not mean a bridge is unsafe. Most SD bridges can continue to serve traffic safely if they are properly inspected and maintained, but they must often be posted for weight limits that are less than the maximum legal (non-permit) weights allowed by law.

In accordance with the Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measures final rule published by FHWA in January of 2017, the definition of the term of “structurally deficient” has been changed by the FHWA, and the use of the terms “Good”, “Fair” and “Poor” has been implemented. The new classification of “Poor” is most equivalent to the previous classification of “SD”. Under the previous definition, a bridge was classified as SD when significant load carrying components were found to be in poor or worse condition due to deterioration and/or damage or when the adequacy of the waterway opening provided by the bridge was determined to be extremely insufficient to the point of causing intolerable traffic interruptions. Under the new definition, a bridge still qualifies as SD when significant load carrying components are found to be in poor or worse condition, but it no longer qualifies as structurally deficient via the structural condition (NBI Item 67) or the waterway adequacy (NBI Item 71) rating criteria. Therefore, some bridges that qualified as “SD” under the previous definition do not qualify as “Poor” under the new definition.

In FY 2021, this report continued the use of the previous rule/definition in order to allow valid historic comparisons within the State of Iowa; however, a column on the right side of the report was added that showed the number of bridges classified as “Poor” using the new definition. As of FY 2022, the report has fully transitioned to the use of the new SD definition.

The SD classification is determined based on the latest bridge inspection data and criteria prescribed by the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS) published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

What do each of the columns of this report mean?

Beginning Status – This section shows how the starting total of SD bridges for the reporting period are calculated.

SD Reported at End of FY'24 – This is the number of bridges which were classified as SD at the beginning of the reporting period. This is the “Total SD Remaining at End of FY” value from the previous SD Bridge Report.

Became SD during FY – This is the number of bridges that were not in SD status on the previously published official National Bridge Inventory (NBI) but became SD in the official NBI published during the reporting period.

Structures that remained in SD Status – This section describes the status of bridges that had an official SD status in the NBI as of January 1, 2025. These bridges are grouped into two main categories and several subcategories, as shown below:

Official NBI Data 1/1/2025 – This is the number of bridges in SD status as of January 1, 2025, according to the official NBI published during the reporting period.

In Service (Open) - Still SD – These bridges are still open to traffic while remaining in SD condition.

Partially Rehabbed – This is the number of SD bridges on which minor repairs were made but not enough to remove the SD condition. Examples might include limited deck patching, bridge approach pavement repairs, bridge railing repairs, or joint replacements.

Programmed for Replacement or Rehab – This is the number of SD bridges included in the county’s five-year program which are scheduled for replacement or repair/rehabilitation.

Not yet programmed – This is the number of SD bridges not yet included in the county’s five-year program for repair or replacement.

Out of Service (Closed) – These bridges are closed to vehicular traffic and remain in SD condition.

Closed: Programmed to Replace – This is the number of SD bridges which are closed to traffic, and which will be replaced with a currently programmed project.

Closed: Not Planned to Reopen – This is the number of SD bridges which are closed to traffic, and which are not currently programmed for replacement or rehabilitation.

Structures Taken Off SD Status – This section shows the number of bridges that were restored to full legal load capacity, thereby removing the SD classifications. It also provides a breakdown of how these bridges were fixed.

via Replacement – This is the number of SD bridges which were replaced by a new bridge or culvert.

via Major Rehabilitation – This is the number of SD bridges which were not completely reconstructed but which had repairs made that were substantial enough to improve the condition enough to remove the SD condition designation. Examples might include complete deck replacements, beam replacements, or major repairs to the bridge piers or abutments (substructure supports).

via Light Rehabilitation – This is the number of SD bridges for which only minor repairs were needed to improve the condition enough to remove the SD condition designation. Examples might include deck patching, beam strengthening, or less substantial repairs to the bridge piers (substructure supports).

via Removal or Reinspection – This is the number of SD bridges which were either physically removed or which were removed from the SD condition designation due to a change in inspection ratings.

Total Restored – This is the sum of the previous four columns, representing the total number of SD bridges replaced or repaired during the reporting period so that they no longer have a SD condition designation.

Total SD Remaining at End of FY'25 – This is the total number of bridges that remain in SD status at the close of the reporting period.

Net Improvement (box in bottom, right corner) – This is the difference between the number of SD bridges at the beginning of the reporting period and the number of SD bridges remaining at the end of the reporting period.