Bad Central Ohio roads are costing drivers more than just headaches

by Mike McCarthy | Thursday, June 21st 2018

COLUMBUS, Ohio (WSYX/WTTE) — Fixing car damage from a pothole can be a costly repair.

However, a new study released Thursday says potholes are only some of the problems on Central Ohio roads that cost individual Columbus drivers $1,906 annually.

The "Modernizing Ohio's Transportation System: Progress and Challenges in Providing Safe, Efficient and Well-Maintained Roads, Highways and Bridges" report says "roads and bridges that are deteriorated, congested or lack some desirable safety features cost Ohio motorists a total of $12 billion statewide annually...due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes and congestion-related delays."

A private non-profit national transportation research group called "TRIP" produced the report. According to TRIP's website, the group is sponsored by "insurance companies, equipment manufacturers, distributors and suppliers, businesses involved in highway and transit engineering and construction, labor unions, and organizations concerned with an efficient and safe surface transportation network that promotes economic development and quality of life."

The TRIP report lists 24 percent of major locally and state-maintained roads in Columbus are in "poor" condition, 24 percent are in "mediocre" condition, 14 percent in "fair" condition, and 38% in "good" condition.

"Traffic congestion in the Columbus area is worsening, costing the average driver $997 annually in lost time and wasted fuel. The average motorist in the Columbus area loses 44 hours each year more than five working days - stuck in traffic congestion," the report states.

"Without adequate funding, Ohio's transportation system will become increasingly deteriorated and congested, hampering economic growth, safety and quality of life." Will Wilkins, TRIP's exectuive director, said in a written statement.

TRIP doesn't make recommends on sources for additional funding, a spokesperson said.