

Aging Road and Bridge Infrastructure Continues to Nag Connecticut in Latest Studies

By [Heather Brandon](#) · 11/24/15



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Connecticut's persistent transportation woes are getting attention in two recent reports. The studies highlight how aging infrastructure is causing problems for highway travel in the state.

A [report by TRIP, a national transportation research group](#) based in Washington, D.C., said Connecticut drivers are losing \$5.1 billion a year due to increasing costs vehicle operation, congestion, and safety problems on the road.

The report broke down the problems in three Connecticut metro areas: Bridgeport/Stamford, Hartford, and New Haven.

A graph below compares the metro areas by wasted vehicle operating cost (VOC), congestion costs, and the financial cost of traffic crashes.

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Location	VOC	Congestion	Safety	TOTAL
Bridgeport/Stamford	\$701	\$1,174	\$347	\$2,222
Hartford	\$654	\$1,038	\$544	\$2,236
New Haven	\$707	\$932	\$411	\$2,050
Connecticut	\$1.6 Billion	\$2.3 Billion	\$1.2 Billion	\$5.1Billion

Credit [tripnet.org](#)

Another [study, by the American Highway Users Alliance, looked at the country's worst highway bottlenecks](#), where congestion is at its worst. Two spots in Connecticut made the top 100: the I-84 highway in Hartford between Trumbull and Park Streets, and the I-95 highway in Stamford between Fairfield Avenue and Elm Street.

[From the blog Connecticut By the Numbers:](#)

According to the data, the average length of the back-up in Hartford is 1.4 miles; in Stamford 1.3 miles. The average total annual delay at the Hartford bottleneck is 705,000 hours; in Stamford 494,000 hours of lost productivity.

Speaking at the American Highway Users Alliance press conference where the report was released, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said, "This report furthers the unassailable truth that America is stuck in traffic. The good news is that this problem is solvable, and Congress can be part of the solution. As a long-term surface transportation bill moves through conference, I urge our elected leaders to provide the funding growth and policies that are necessary to improve commutes, to raise the bar for safety, and to keep the country moving in the 21st century."

TRIP said Connecticut's population growth is putting a strain on infrastructure, with a nine percent increase since 1990. Vehicle miles traveled in the state have gone up by 18 percent between 1990 and 2013.

That figure of vehicle miles traveled is likely to continue to rise, [as journalist Yonah Freemark wrote at his blog, The Transport Politic](#). He said while there's an increase in transit ridership, and young adults are delaying getting driver's licenses, there are more people driving alone to work.

From the blog:

[We] shouldn't be surprised that the dominant narrative is one of a move away from cars. But the truth is that the dominant reality is actually a move toward more cars.

This all might point to a need to give the infrastructure some attention.

Connecticut Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff said the TRIP report about bad roads and bridges comes at a crucial time, as federal surface transportation legislation is set to expire on December 4. He said the report should be seen by Congress as a "call to action" from Connecticut.