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Massachusetts roads, bridges, highways, public transportation inadequate to drive economic growth, report says



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SPRINGFIELD — The average Springfield driver loses more than \$1,600 each year as a result of driving on congested, deteriorated and poorly maintained roads, according to a report released on Tuesday by TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C. *(The report is embedded at the end of this story)*

Rockey Moretti, TRIP's director of research and policy, will discuss findings contained in the report – "Massachusetts Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State's Need for Safe and Efficient Mobility" – at a 3:30 p.m. news conference on Tuesday on the top floor of the the Interstate-91 South Parking garage. In addition to statewide findings, the report contains regional breakdowns for Boston, South Coast, Springfield and Worcester.

The report says the state of Massachusetts must boost funding to improve its system of roads, highways and bridges to "foster economic growth and keep businesses in the state" and to "ensure safe, reliable mobility and quality of life for all residents."

The state's Transportation Finance Act of 2013, providing an additional \$600 million annual for improvements to the state's roads, bridges, rails and transit system, is \$400 million short of the estimated \$1 billion in additional annual transportation investment needed in the state, the report said.

Additional federal funds are also critical to improve and modernize the states' system of roads, rails and public transit, the report said.

The report outlined inadequate transportation costs including the following:

- An inadequate transportation system costs Massachusetts residents a total of \$8.3 billion every year in the form of additional vehicle operating costs, congestion-related delays and traffic crashes.
- A lack of adequate state and local funding has resulted in one-fifth of major roads and highways in Massachusetts having pavement surfaces in poor condition, providing a rough ride and costing motorists in the form of additional vehicle operating costs.
- More than half of locally and state-maintained bridges in Massachusetts show significant deterioration or do not meet current design standards – often because of narrow lanes, inadequate clearances or poor alignment. This includes all bridges that are 20 feet or more in length.
- Improving safety features on Massachusetts' roads and highways would likely result in a decrease in the state's traffic fatalities and serious crashes. It is estimated that roadway features are likely a contributing factor in approximately one-third of all fatal and serious traffic crashes.
- The efficiency of Massachusetts' transportation system, particularly its highways, is critical to the health of the state's economy. Businesses are increasingly reliant on an efficient and dependable transportation system to move products and services.

Founded in 1971, TRIP is a private nonprofit organization that researches, evaluates and distributes economic and technical data on surface transportation issues.

[According to its website](#), "TRIP promotes transportation policies that help relieve traffic congestion and its impact on air quality, improve road and bridge conditions, make surface travel safer, and enhance economic productivity.

"TRIP 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."

[MA Transportation by the Numbers TRIP Report Oct 2014](#)