

## Minnesota Facing Road Funding Crisis

*The state's roads are in poor condition and cost commuters time and money.*

By [Anders Koskinen](#)



ST. PAUL, Minn. – According to a national transportation research group, Minnesota faces a \$2.8 billion shortfall in funding for improvements to its transportation system.

The [Minnesota-specific report](#), released in May by the private nonprofit research group TRIP, states that the \$2.8 billion shortfall covers only the next four years. Over the course of those four years, the annual shortfall is projected to more than double.

“Road and bridge conditions will continue to deteriorate and numerous projects to improve the condition and expand the capacity of Minnesota’s roads, highways, bridges and transit systems will not be able to proceed without a substantial boost in state or local transportation funding,” reads the report. “If Minnesota is unable to complete needed transportation projects it will hamper the state’s ability to improve the condition and efficiency of its transportation system or enhance economic development opportunities and quality of life.”

A total of 47 percent of all miles of Minnesota’s major locally and state-maintained roads and highways failed to earn a “good” rating from TRIP, and 15 percent were labeled as in “poor” condition.

In urban areas it is even worse, as 65 percent of these roads and highways scored under “good,” and 28 percent were labeled as poor. Among the state’s three major metro areas, Duluth has it the worst, as 47 percent of these roads within the city’s metropolitan area are in poor condition. In Rochester that number is 27 percent, while Minneapolis-St. Paul has a 25 percent mark.

By 2020, TRIP projects that a full 80 percent of locally and state-maintained roads and highways will be in poor condition.

Additionally, the TRIP report is critical of the traffic congestion that Minnesota’s roads and highways cause around the state’s metropolitan areas. Here Minneapolis-St. Paul is far and away the worst off. Commuters in that metro area lose about 47 hours, almost two full days, of their time due to the traffic congestion over the course of the year. The congestion also ends up costing them \$1,035 in a year in wasted time and additional vehicle use costs including gas.

In Duluth the numbers for commuters are 20 hours and \$541 a year, while in Rochester they are 13 hours and \$282.

Minnesota’s Department of Transportation is targeting [\\$1 billion in construction projects](#) on roads and bridges during the 2017 construction season. According to TRIP, this is not nearly enough.