



Poor road conditions costing Hattiesburg drivers thousands

By Amanda LaBrot, Reporter | Thursday, June 1st, 2017



HATTIESBURG, MS (WDAM) - Poor road conditions, congestion and a lack of some safety features along roads and bridges are costing Hattiesburg drivers thousands of dollars a year, according to a new report.

The new [report](#) by TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, DC., found the average driver in the greater [Hattiesburg](#) area spends an additional \$1,300 annually to pay for car repairs, wasted time and gas because of congestion-related delays and traffic crashes.

"With 51 percent of the roadways being in poor or mediocre condition, it's just a rising cost to the consumer," said Chad Newell, president of the Area Development Partnership. "We either pay that as drivers or the state finds a revenue stream to improve the roadways."

Newell said county and city governments have done the best they can with their limited resources. He said there have been several collaborative projects between local entities - like paving in the Hattiesburg-Forrest County Industrial Park, [widening](#) Hegwood Road from U.S. 98 to Lincoln Road and adding a red light at the intersection of Hegwood Road and Lincoln Road- to improve road conditions, congestion and safety, but said more could be done with more money.

"Obviously, we need additional funding at the local and state level to make those necessary improvements to upgrade the roadways," Newell said. "That's important because we all want to get safely from point A to point B, to the workplace, to the home."

The report comes five days before the start of a special legislative session to consider Mississippi Department of Transportation funding.