



Road conditions cost region's drivers nearly \$1,700 annually

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Rochester Business Journal

January 22, 2016

Deficient roads cost New York motorists nearly \$25 billion annually, a new report from a national transportation research group contends.

TRIP— a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization that researches, evaluates and distributes economic and technical data on surface transportation issues—estimates Rochester area drivers spend an additional \$1,700 annually to maintain their vehicles as a result of driving on roads that are deteriorated, congested and lack some desirable safety features.

New York City drivers spend \$2,800 a year maintaining their cars, the report shows.

New York's Top Transportation Issues: Meeting the State's Need for Safe, Smooth and Efficient Mobility states that throughout New York 38 percent of major locally and state-maintained urban roads are in poor condition. Nearly two-fifths of the state's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

In Rochester some 11 percent of the roads are in poor condition, while 18 percent are in mediocre condition, the report states. Some 57 of the area's 609 bridges are considered structurally deficient, while 199 are functionally obsolete.

Structurally deficient bridges are those with significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports or other major components, while functionally obsolete bridges no longer meet current highway design standards.

The state's major urban roads are becoming increasingly congested, with drivers wasting significant amounts of time and fuel each year, the report states. Rochesterians waste 39 hours annually due to traffic congestion.

"Today's TRIP report highlights the poor conditions that New Yorkers across the state face on our roads and bridges every day," said John Corlett, legislative committee chairman at AAA New York State. "In 2015 alone, AAA serviced more than 200,000 flat tire calls throughout New York, many of which were due to potholes and other hazardous road conditions. This is a symptom of the lack of adequate investment in roads."

Last month Congress passed a long-term federal surface transportation program that includes modest funding increases and allows state and local governments to plan and finance projects through 2020. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act provides \$305 billion for surface transportation.

The TRIP report's authors suggest that while the modest funding increase are a step in the right direction, the funding falls "far short" of the level needed to improve conditions and meet the nation's mobility needs.

The report noted that in New York, the number of miles traveled increased 21 percent from 1990 to 2013 and the state had 11.2 million licensed drivers at the end of that period. By 2030, the report contends, vehicle travel in New York is projected to increase by another 15 percent.