

Bad roads cost area motorists \$1,700/year

TRIP report cites accidents, vehicle costs, traffic delays

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A deteriorating concrete on an overpass on Route 390 over a Gates road last spring. (Photo: File photo 2015)

Drivers in the Rochester area are being hit with an annual cost of nearly \$1,700 a year because of bad roads, a report released Thursday found.

Deficient roads are costing New Yorkers \$24.9 billion a year in higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes and congestion-related delays, contends [the report from TRIP, a national transportation advocacy group](#).

The cost to drivers, the group estimated, ranged from \$2,800 in the New York City metro area to \$1,400 in the Binghamton area, the group said.

The group advocated for more investment in roads and bridges, and New York is set to embark on a major overhaul of its infrastructure.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo is proposing a \$100 billion investment — \$22 billion over five years for upstate roads and bridges, a \$4 billion new Tappan Zee Bridge, renovations to Penn Station in midtown Manhattan and a tunnel between New Jersey and New York City.

"All experts are unanimous that investment today in the infrastructure of tomorrow creates jobs and builds economic strength," Cuomo said in his *State of the State* address last week.

The report said that nearly two-fifths of New York's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, and nearly 5,800 people were killed in crashes on New York's roads from 2010 to 2014.

"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, in a statement from the group.

Car repair shops see about a dozen cars a week come in with issues related to poor road conditions, especially in the winter, said George Lazor of Vision Buick GMC in Penfield. Front suspension parts that help steer the car have been bent or broken in half from abrupt bumps or potholes, Lazor said.

Nearly 90 percent of roads and half the bridges in the state are owned by local governments, and these municipalities outside New York City invest about a billion dollars a year into the infrastructure, said Leicester, Livingston County, Highway Superintendent Russell Page.

"A safe and efficient infrastructure is necessary for the traveling public of our economy," said Page.

TRIP, a nonprofit group, [is funded by insurance companies](#) and construction and business groups.

Cuomo has faced pressure [to provide parity](#) between funding for the infrastructure in upstate and downstate.

The state is paying \$26 billion for improvements to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, including Metro North, in New York City and the

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Hudson Valley. Cuomo sought to offset that by the upstate investment, as well as a freeze on state Thruway tolls — including on the Tappan Zee Bridge — until 2020.

But questions remain about how [Cuomo will pay for his massive infrastructure plan](#).

"The source and the timing of this funding commitment have not yet been identified, nor have details of the plan, including a project list and commitments by spending category been provided to the Legislature," [Senate Republicans wrote in their review](#) of the budget Wednesday.

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