

Report: SD Roads Endangered By Lack Of Funds



by [Perry Groten](#)

SIOUX FALLS, SD - A national transportation research group is flashing warning lights over the future of South Dakota's roads and bridges.

The non-profit group called TRIP has been compiling transportation data from the feds, as well as the state, plus county and townships. Its latest report concludes that South Dakota's roads and

bridges will go downhill fast without more money.

On a wintry day when ice and snow create slick conditions for drivers, transportation researchers have been examining the financial footing of South Dakota's roads and bridges.

"And when you start to see the system fail, it starts to have significant economic impact," TRIP Director of Policy & Research Rocky Moretti said.

The report says even roads that engineers consider good to excellent today could be downgraded to poor condition within a decade without adequate funding.

"Essentially, what they're saying is we don't have the money to maintain the system, it's going to start to deteriorate and deteriorate very rapidly," Moretti said.

The report doesn't give a final dollar amount as to how much is needed to fix South Dakota roads and bridges. But local business leaders have a ballpark figure in mind.

"Just say this, I think the need is a lot greater than \$100 million," Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Evan Nolte said.

Nolte says it's important that state lawmakers reach an agreement on a funding bill this year to ensure that the bleak predictions about South Dakota's roads made in the TRIP report don't come to pass.

"It's only going to start to get worse unless we start addressing it," Nolte said.

Bad roads are as much a safety issue as they are an economic issue for South Dakota. The report says road conditions are a contributing factor in as many as a third of all deadly crashes in the state.

To see the entire report, [click here](#)