Cost of driving in Chattanooga

Report: City drivers lose $1,500 a year due to insufficient roads

**By the numbers**

- 4,965: People who were killed in Tennessee traffic crashes from 2012 to 2016
- 65: People who were killed in Chattanooga traffic crashes for each of the last three years.
- 33 percent: Locally and state-maintained roads are “poor” or “mediocre”
- 28 hours: The average Chattanoogan’s time lost per year due to traffic congestion

Source: TRIP

**Additional cost to drivers by city**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Vehicle operating costs</th>
<th>Lack of adequate roadway safety features</th>
<th>Congestion</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHATTANOOGA</td>
<td>$387</td>
<td>$354</td>
<td>$730</td>
<td>$1,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOXVILLE</td>
<td>$172</td>
<td>$355</td>
<td>$849</td>
<td>$1,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMPHIS</td>
<td>$589</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>$1,080</td>
<td>$2,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASHVILLE</td>
<td>$307</td>
<td>$307</td>
<td>$2,019</td>
<td>$2,327</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Haslam's plan seeks to raise gas taxes** by 6 cents per gallon and diesel by 10 cents over a three-year period while also increasing vehicle registration fees and several other fees to raise $350 million he says is needed to address a backlog of $10.5 billion of infrastructure projects.

Some say the proposed gas tax is unnecessary and would actually harm Tennessee residents. Americans For Prosperity has released a string of ads decrying the legislation.

"It's odd to see Governor Haslam depending on at least 20 Democrats to vote in favor of a tax hike that will harm their constituents the most," Andy Ogles, Tennessee's Americans For Prosperity state director, wrote in a news release. "Even with a full one percent cut to the grocery tax most families, especially those with fixed or lower incomes, will lose in this tax swap."

"There are options to fund infrastructure without raising taxes or fees by one cent. Given the state has a two-billion-dollar surplus, we should be cutting taxes, not raising them. It's time for the legislature to listen to their constituents, not those seeking to profit off raising taxes on hardworking families."

The rate at which roadways are deteriorating across the nation has also accelerated as more and more drivers contribute to their wear and tear. The report shows that is a double-edged sword because while the cost of repairs is ballooning, the economy is barreling ahead.

"One of the most critical findings of the report is that vehicle travel is growing very rapidly here in Tennessee. That's a positive — it reflects economic growth," Moretti said. "We estimate that by 2030 vehicle travel is growing very rapidly here in Tennessee. That's a positive — it reflects economic growth."

Drivers in Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville lose $1,376, $2,019 and $1,667 respectively every year.

"Roadways are really the foundation for traffic safety," said Stephanie Milani, Tennessee public relations director for AAA. "If you do not have adequate roads and traffic safety measures on those roads, you can see greater crash risks, and then also that reduces our mobility."