



# The Capital

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## Study: Washington area tops Baltimore area for region's worst congested highways

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Just as the General Assembly is in the final stages of approving a budget, Maryland transportation officials and a nonprofit group have released a ranking of the most congested major roads in the state that cited Gov. Larry Hogan's transportation priorities.

A new report by the nonprofit TRIP released Thursday found the Capital Beltway between Route 1 and Route 29 in Prince George's County is the worst congested highway in the state during the morning commute.



*Annapolis is stuck with Forest Drive congestion*

The distinction shifts to the Baltimore Beltway between Routes 139 and Loch Raven Boulevard in Baltimore County for the evening commute.

"Keeping Maryland Mobile" was released at the Maryland State Highway Administration Statewide Operations Center in Hanover just as the state Senate is finalizing deliberations on the budget plan that includes transportation spending. The House of Delegates held back Hogan's plan for express toll lanes to three of Maryland's most congested highways — the Capital Beltway, the Interstate 270 spur connecting Frederick to the Washington area, and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.

And it came the day after Hogan sent a letter to Maryland's congressional delegation asking them to support his plans to seek transfer of the parkway from the National Park Service to the state.

"We want to take over the road because it is the best way to take care of the road," he wrote.

TRIP's report, based on a 2018 state study, said Maryland's major urban highways and roads carried the highest average daily traffic per lane mile in the nation in 2017. The average daily commute for the state's residents was 32.7 minutes, the second longest average.

The Baltimore area loses 50 hours to congestion each year at an annual cost of \$1,220 per driver in lost time and wasted fuel. That figure rose to 87 hours and \$2,007 in the Washington area.

Most of the worst congested highways are in the Washington area.

After the Capital Beltway stretch, the worst three highway commutes in the morning cited in the report were:

- Baltimore Beltway outer loop, from Interstate 795 to Edmonson Avenue.
- Capital Beltway outer loop, Route 1 to Route 41.
- Interstate 270 local southbound, Shady Grove Road to Montrose Road.

The report also listed the worst arterial congestion for morning commuters, with Route 29 approaching the Capital Beltway, Powder Mill Road in Beltsville and Connecticut Avenue at the Washington, D.C., line.

For evening commutes, the top three worst congestion stretches of highway after the Baltimore Beltway section were:

- The I-270 spur southbound from the split to the Capital Beltway.
- Capital Beltway inner loop from the Virginia line to I-270.
- The Capital Beltway outer loop from Route 185 to the state line.

The top three arterial roads listed were Indian Head Highway from Kerby Hill Road to Palmer Road, Route 650 southbound from Route 29 to Adelphi Road and Connecticut Avenue near the Capital Beltway.

In Anne Arundel County, portions of the BW Parkway and Route 3 south near Route 175 also show up on the list of the worst roads.

The report also looked at truck traffic and projected that freight traffic is expected to increase significantly through 2040. It listed the road with the worst truck congested as Interstate 95 near Route 175 in Howard County.

The report listed \$178 billion in transportation projects proposed by Gov. Larry Hogan, including the widening of approximately 70 miles of interstates, a traffic relief plan for portions of the Baltimore Beltway and other initiatives.

The [Maryland General Assembly](#) last week overwhelmingly passed a \$46.7 billion spending plan that boosts funding for the state's public schools while cutting some of [Hogan's](#) favored proposals. The House of Delegates has passed the governor's \$4.6 billion capital budget. The Senate is now considering that bill.