



The San Diego Union-Tribune

sandiegouniontribune.com

WEDNESDAY - AUGUST 15, 2018

Report: Traffic delays and pot holes cost San Diego drivers nearly \$2,000 a year



[Joshua Emerson Smith](#) -
[Contact Reporter](#)

Commuters in the San Diego region shell out nearly \$2,000 a year on average for hidden costs associated with poor road conditions and traffic jams, according to a [report released Wednesday](#) from national transportation research group TRIP. Driving on deteriorating or unsafe roads in San Diego cost the average driver \$1,021 a year in everything from maintenance and repairs to emergency medical costs following a crash, according to the findings.

Other impacts outlined in the report included faster depreciation of a vehicle's value, increased wear on tires and legal bills. Lost time and fuel spent in traffic accounted for an average of \$920 in annual costs for drivers in San Diego, where an average driver loses more than 40 hours a year stuck in traffic. The Washington, D.C.-based group's report [looked at a dozen regions](#) around the state, from Southern California to Sacramento, finding that Californians spend about \$61 billion total every year on extra costs associated with crumbling roads, highways and bridges.

Drivers in five metropolitan areas were hit with higher costs than San Diego, including in Sacramento, San Bernardino, the San Jose area, San Francisco and Los Angeles. L.A. topped the list with \$2,995 in average annual hidden costs associated with substandard road conditions.

The report found that inadequate state and local funding has resulted in roughly 68 percent of major roads and highways in mediocre or poor condition. That figure was 64 percent for San Diego and as high as 71 percent in the Bay Area.

The report comes as voters prepare to vote in November on whether to repeal an increase on fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees.

Spearheaded by Gov. Jerry Brown, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 hiked taxes on gasoline by 12 cents and diesel fuel by 20 cents. Vehicle registration fees increased by \$25 to \$175 a year, depending on the value of a vehicle.

The citizens' initiative, known as Proposition 6, would roll back those hikes and require a two-thirds public vote for any future increases on fuel taxes or vehicle fees. Gas tax opponents have repeatedly accused state lawmakers of "diverting" past revenue from fuel taxes to pet projects.

Supporters of the tax increases have said they will bring in \$54 billion in the next decade for much-needed funds to fix bridges, public transit and other projects.

With the taxes and fee hikes, Californians will pay an extra \$10 a month on average, according to the state Department of Transportation. A legislative analysis found that drivers currently spend roughly \$700 a year fixing their cars due to poor roads.