



National transportation research group says Kansas residents are paying for lack of roads funding

by [Nick Gosnell](#) on April 27, 2017

The price tag to Kansas for spending less on its highways is massive, according to a survey from TRIP, a national transportation research group.

“Kansas residents are paying an additional \$2.7 billion annually in the cost of driving on rough roads, the cost of delays caused by traffic congestion and the economic consequences of traffic crashes,” said Rocky Moretti, Director of Policy and Research for TRIP.



The report states that the ability of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) to repair and improve the state’s transportation system has been hampered by the transfer of \$2.4 billion in state highway funds to state general funds and other state agencies between fiscal year 2011 and fiscal year 2017.

“Thirty-seven percent of urban roads in Kansas have pavements in poor condition,” said Moretti. “In the Topeka area, nearly half of the major roads in the area, 47 percent of them have roads in poor condition.”

Moretti was introduced by Kansas Contractors Association Executive Vice President Bob Totten. Totten believes the loss of funding has hampered the state’s TWorks transportation program.

“This program, unfortunately, has not delivered what it was supposed to do in 2011, when we thought we were going to have \$8 billion,” said Totten. “The county commissions all passed resolutions supporting it. They said, you know we want to have a highway program that’s long term. This one has not done that. None of them said in seven years down the road they wanted to see \$3.4 billion taken out of an \$8 billion program. We do have to have forward thinking. We do not see that presently from our leadership at the state level. It’s unfortunate, and we’re going to pay for it in the future.”

Vehicle miles traveled in Kansas increased by 14 percent from 2000 to 2016, from 28.1 billion VMT in 2000 to 32.1 billion VMT in 2016. From 2013 to 2016, VMT in the state increased by six percent. By 2030, vehicle travel in Kansas is projected to increase by another 15 percent.

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