

JOURNAL-NEWS

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Monday

June 25, 2018

Today Tuesday Wednesday



81/65 84/72 85/70
Partly cloudy Chance of storms Chance of storms

Full Northern Cincinnati forecast: C6

Report: Drivers pay price for bad roads

Typical Cincinnati-area motorist sees \$2K hit over poor conditions

By Eric Schwartzberg and Bailey Gallion Staff Writers

Nearly one third of Ohio's roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and one group estimates they cost the average Cincinnati-area driver more than \$2,000 annually and drivers statewide \$12 billion, according to a new report.

Rocky Moretti, TRIP's director of policy and research, stressed the need for more funding for vehicle maintenance during a news conference Thursday. "Where appropriate, highway improvements can reduce traffic fatalities and crashes while improving traffic flow to help relieve congestion," Moretti said. "Such improvements include removing or shielding obstacles; adding or improving medians; improved lighting; adding rumble strips, wider lanes, wider and paved shoulders; upgrading roads from two lanes to four lanes; and better road markings and traffic signals."

According to the report, 23 percent of Ohio's major locally and state-owned roads are in poor or mediocre condition. Additionally, seven percent of Ohio's locally- and state-owned bridges are structurally deficient.

Rural roads see more fatal crashes than urban roads, according to the report. The fatality rate on Ohio's non-interstate rural roads in 2016 was about two-and-a-half times that on all other roads.

Costs for drivers

The report from TRIP found that badly maintained roads cost Cincinnati-area drivers an average of \$2,022 per year. The costs stem from repairing damaged vehicles (\$391), loss of time and fuel from waiting in traffic (\$1,057) and depreciation of vehicle values (\$574).

TRIP estimates that the average motorist in the Middletown area spends an additional \$672 annually in extra vehicle operating costs/depreciation of vehicle values.

While there is no similar data available for the urban areas of Hamilton or Fairfield, the average economic cost of fatal and serious traffic crashes in which a lack of adequate safety features were a contributing factor per motorist in Butler County is \$377, Moretti said.

There was an average of 27 fatalities in traffic crashes in Butler County from 2014 to 2016, he said. The TRIP report measured costs to drivers by analyzing the impact of decreased vehicle value, traffic crashes and wasted gas and time due to congestion. In the Cincinnati area, vehicle depreciation and congestion had the greatest impact. Vehicle depreciation cost the average driver \$574 per year, safety issues cost \$391, and congestion cost \$1,057.

The Cincinnati area had the second lowest cost to drivers out of Ohio's largest urban areas. Drivers in the Cleveland/Akron area paid the highest cost at about \$2,180 per year.

The average driver in the Cincinnati area spends 44 hours per year — more than one full working week — stuck in traffic. That's also the most time of any

major metro area stuck in traffic. Dayton drivers, in contrast, lost an average of 27 hours a year.

There is no congestion estimate for the Middletown area, Moretti said.

Projects in need of funding

The report identified 21 needed transportation projects in major urban areas that lack adequate funding for construction to proceed, including a project to improve Brent Spence Bridge approach work along Interstate 75 and the Ohio share of main span.

Other improvement projects lacking adequate funding include widening I-75 in some portions of the Greater Cincinnati area, improvements to the Western Hills Viaduct, and improvements to the Eastern Corridor, including widening, new interchanges and improvements to ramps and overpasses, Moretti said.

"It is critical that Ohio have adequate funding to proceed with these needed projects and to further improve the condition, reliability and safety of its transportation system," he said.

According to the report, every \$1 in deferred maintenance on roads and bridges costs an additional \$4 to \$5 in future repairs.

Pavement deterioration also accelerates with time, and older roads cost drivers more money in vehicle repairs.

Funding is decreasing

The use of roads in Ohio has increased over the years at the same time funding has decreased.

Since 2000, the number of miles vehicles travelled on roads in the state increased 12 percent. By 2040, miles travelled are projected to increase another 20 percent.

The largest source for funding of roadways in Ohio are federal and state motor vehicle fuel fees. Inflation has eroded the worth of those fees, which were last increased in 1993. Revenue from the fuel fees has decreased over 40 percent since 1993.

The Ohio Department of Transportation estimates the cost of maintaining roadway and public transportation systems is about \$55 billion through 2040, but only \$41 billion is projected to be available.

The use of Ohio Turnpike bond proceeds have allowed the Ohio Department of Transportation to increase its annual funding for road, highway and bridge repairs to increase to 2.35 billion in 2018, Moretti said. But as these bond funds diminish, the state's transportation funding is expected to decrease to \$1.85 billion in 2019 and to \$1.7 billion by 2021, he said.

Ohio's investment in its roads and bridges are hampered by the impact of inflation that has reduced the buying power of the state's 28-cents-per-gallon

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LOCAL & STATE BY
VIRTUAL PINBALL COMPANY
MOVING TO HAMILTON SITE

LOCAL & STATE BY
SOUTH HAMILTON CROSSING
TO BE DEDICATED AUGUST 11

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BUTLER COUNTY



Construction workers are at work on a project for the new bridge at Interstate 75 and the Ohio share of main span.

Ohio Department of Transportation estimates the cost of maintaining roadway and public transportation systems is about \$55 billion through 2040, but only \$41 billion is projected to be available. A report says that the average Ohio motorist spends nearly \$2,000 a year on vehicle maintenance.

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DIGGING DEEPER

As numbers decline, WSU seeks answers

Drop in enrollment continues at Miami, OKLA. ED have seen increases.

BY THE NUMBERS
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TRUMP: NO DUE PROCESS FOR THE UNDOCUMENTED

He tweets he wants those who 'invade' U.S. deported immediately.

By Eric Schwartzberg and Bailey Gallion Staff Writers

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NATION & WORLD AS BACKLASH TO NEW VACCINE TO FIGHT SHINGLES

A national shortage of a new and effective shingles vaccine left some who are 50 and older unable to get the shot.

The shortage of the new vaccine is due to a combination of factors, including a lack of supply and demand.

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LOCAL & STATE BY FAMILIAR SAFETY TOWN SUCCEEDS WITH PRE-K SET

Parents and teachers are pleased with the results of the pre-K program.

The program has been successful in providing quality education for young children.

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