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## National report: Half of Wisconsin's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition

By [Katelyn Ferral](#) | September 18, 2018



A road sign on Highway 33 near McKinley Beach Road, town of Beaver Dam, warns of an upcoming bump. The left westbound lane of the highway closed for a short time due to a pavement buckle. A national report released Tuesday found that 55 percent of Wisconsin roads have pavement that is in poor condition, according to data from the Federal Highway Administration.

PHOTO BY KELLY SIMON -- DAILY CITIZEN

Half of Wisconsin's major roads are in poor or mediocre shape, with Madison, Milwaukee and Wausau roads in the worst condition, according to a national report released Tuesday.

The report, "Wisconsin Transportation by the Numbers" was compiled by [TRIP](#), a national nonprofit transportation research group [funded](#) by a variety of road-building business interests, including equipment manufacturers, distributors, suppliers, transit engineers and labor unions.

The group used 2016 data the state Department of Transportation provides annually to the Federal Highway Administration in its analysis of road and pavement conditions.

According to that data, 55 percent of Wisconsin's major locally and state-maintained roads have pavement that is in poor condition and 19 percent in mediocre condition. Milwaukee fares the worst, with poorly rated pavement on 54 percent of the city's major roads. In Madison, 49

percent of roads have pavement in poor condition, according to federal highway data cited in the report.

The report blames "inadequate state and local funding" for worsening conditions and estimates that drivers in some Wisconsin cities spend nearly \$1,000 a year on repairs due to driving their vehicles on deteriorating roads.

Dan Fedderly, executive director of the Wisconsin County Highway Association, put the blame on the state's politicians.

"Until state elected officials are able to agree on a long-term, sustainable transportation funding, Wisconsin will be unable to meet mounting needs on our local roads and state highways," he said in a statement. "The current funding system causes us to be reactive, responding from one crisis to the next."

TRIP analysts estimate a Madison driver spends about \$910 a year and a Milwaukee driver spends \$944 on vehicle repair and maintenance because of road quality.

"This is yet another report confirming the poor condition of Wisconsin's roads and the impact on motorists. While people may immediately think about the muffler they had to replace, this report shows that safety and congestion concerns make up a considerable portion of the cost of driving on deficient roads," said Craig Thompson, executive director of the Wisconsin Transportation Development Association, which has lobbied for more state road funding.

The TRIP report comes as transportation is increasingly becoming a campaign issue for Gov. Scott Walker and his Democratic challenger Tony Evers. Walker has said he has sufficiently funded the state's transportation program, while Evers has said the state needs to raise more money for transportation and that everything should be on the table to determine how to do so.

It follows a state DOT report [released last month](#) that showed funding during Walker's tenure had decreased across every major road program.