

New report identifies most congested highways, roadways throughout Maryland

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Traffic moves north along Interstate 270, Wednesday, Nov. 24, 2010, in Clarksburg, Md., the day before the Thanksgiving Holiday. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, Md. (ABC7) — Maryland's quality of life and economic development is being hampered by high levels of traffic congestion and reduced accessibility, but is benefitting from a statewide program to improve accessibility.

Gov. Larry Hogan has proposed a comprehensive set of transportation improvements designed to improve mobility, according to a new report released today by [TRIP](#), a DC-based national transportation research nonprofit.

According to the [report](#), "Keeping Maryland Mobile: Accomplishments and Challenges in Improving Accessibility in Maryland to Support Quality of Life and a Strong Economy," the state's roads carry the highest traffic volume in the nation and commute lengths are the second longest in the U.S. Traffic congestion costs the state's residents and businesses billions of dollars each year and severely constrains the number of jobs accessible to residents.

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) is implementing a plan to relieve congestion and enhance reliability, and Gov. Hogan has recommended a \$17.8 billion multi-modal congestion relief plan designed to accommodate growth and improve economic development.

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 commute in the nation, behind only New York at 33 minutes.

The average driver in the Washington, DC area loses 87 hours to congestion each year at an annual cost of \$2,007/per driver in lost time and wasted fuel. Congestion on the state's highways, freeways and major arterial roads costs the public \$3.4 billion annually in the value of lost time and wasted fuel.

Traffic congestion also impacts the number of jobs available to residents. While approximately 2.6 million jobs are accessible within a one-hour drive to residents of the DC-metro area, only 24 percent are accessible within a 30-minute drive. And, the number of jobs in the Washington, DC metro area that are accessible within a 40-minute drive was reduced 47 percent as a result of traffic congestion.

"It is critical that Maryland have a robust transportation plan capable of improving mobility and accessibility, which is vital to the state's economic health and quality of life," said Will Wilkins, TRIP's executive director. "While recent state efforts to ease congestion and improve the reliability of Maryland's transportation system have been helpful, more work still needs to be done. Congress can help by fixing the federal Highway Trust Fund and passing major infrastructure legislation."