

Report: Poor Michigan roads cost motorists billions of dollars beyond taxes

[Kurt Nagl](#) | Tuesday, March 12, 2019

- Drivers pay \$14.1 billion annually in costs caused by crumbling roads, traffic delays and crashes
- Detroit drivers incur average of \$824 per year in additional vehicle operating costs
- Failing infrastructure has a broader negative impact on state's economy



Chad Livengood/Crain's Detroit Business

Crumbling roads cost drivers in Michigan hundreds of dollars a year in vehicle repairs and other costs.

Michigan motorists rack up \$14.1 billion annually in additional vehicle operating and other costs caused by crumbling roads, congestion-related delays and crashes, according to a [new report](#) from transportation research nonprofit TRIP.

Wear and tear, increased fuel consumption and vehicle repairs are eating away at drivers' wallets, time and patience.

According to the report, "Modernizing Michigan's Transportation System: Progress & Challenges in Providing Safe, Efficient and Well-Maintained Roads, Highways & Bridges," nearly half of major roads in Michigan are in poor or mediocre condition, more than 1-in-10 bridges are structurally deficient and drivers lose up to 54 hours per year in traffic congestion.

Driving on rough roads costs Michigan motorists \$4.6 billion annually in accelerated vehicle depreciation and additional costs for repairs, gas and tires, says the report from Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit.

TRIP is sponsored by "insurance companies, equipment manufacturers, distributors and suppliers, businesses involved in highway and transit engineering and construction and labor unions," according to its website.

In the Detroit area, poor roads cost the average driver \$824 per year in additional vehicle operating costs, up from \$562 in previous reports, while drivers in Ann Arbor pay \$642 and \$708 in the Lansing area, the report says.

The report also says the state's roads are to blame for congestion that costs motorists another \$5.6 billion in lost time and spent fuel, as well as \$3.9 billion in serious and fatal crashes linked to road design.

Besides costs incurred by average motorists, failing infrastructure has a broader negative impact on the state's economy, the report indicates. Each year, \$1 trillion in goods are shipped — 70 percent by truck and 15 percent by courier services — throughout Michigan, relying heavily on the state's network of roads and bridges.

"Regions with congested or poorly maintained roads may see businesses relocate to areas with a smoother, more efficient and more modern transportation system," according to the report.

TRIP released its report as the state's lawmakers once again reckon with the deteriorating roads and try to agree on a way to fund badly needed fixes. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has proposed a [45-cent fuel tax hike](#) that would generate an additional \$2.48 billion for roads each year and suggested funneling money to the [most highly traveled roads](#).