

Report Says Metro Detroiters Lose \$2,500 Annually Because Of Roads

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DETROIT (WWJ) -- A new report suggests metro Detroiters are losing out on thousands of dollars annually because of the state's crumbling infrastructure.

The data from TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C., says driving on Detroit-area roads costs the average motorist just over \$2,500 a year and a total of \$14.1 billion statewide, in the form of added operating costs due to rough roads, congestion and crashes.

The report, titled "Modernizing Michigan's Transportation System: Progress & Challenges in Providing Safe, Efficient and Well-Maintained Roads, Highways & Bridges," says of the \$2,544 motorists in metro Detroit lose per year, about \$1,200 of it comes because of lost time and wasted fuel due to congestion.

The report says drivers in the area lose about 54 hours per year because of congestion. Around 70 percent of major roads in the Detroit area are in poor or mediocre condition and nearly 10 percent of bridges are structurally deficient, according to the report.

"While increased transportation funding provided by Michigan's 2015 road funding package has allowed many projects to proceed in Detroit and throughout the state, additional investment is needed to complete numerous projects that would improve Michigan's road and bridge conditions, relieve traffic congestion and enhance traffic safety and efficiency," the report says.

The state will see around a \$1.5 billion increase in state funding for local roads and bridges, state roads, bridges and transit by 2023, according to the report.

"The additional transportation funding has allowed the state to move forward with numerous projects in the Detroit area that otherwise may have remained unfunded, though many projects in Detroit and across the state will not move forward without additional transportation funding," the report said.

"The TRIP data confirms what we've been saying for some time: Michigan's roads and bridges are crumbling because of decades of under investment," MDOT Chief Operating Officer and Chief Engineer Tony Kratofil said in a press release. "Ensuring safe and efficient travel is our top priority, and these findings demonstrate the challenges we face fulfilling our mission."

The data says Grand Rapids area drivers lose just over \$2,000 a year, while those in the Ann Arbor area lose an average of \$1,759 annually. Those near the Flint and Kalamazoo areas are estimated to lose just over \$1,900.