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Baton Rouge roads cost drivers nearly \$2,300 annually, \$6.9 billion statewide



by: Karli Carpenter

Roads and bridges that are deteriorated or lack safety features cost Louisiana drivers \$6.9 billion statewide annually and \$2,291 per driver in the Baton Rouge area.

That’s due to higher vehicle operating costs, delays and crashes. An increased

investment in transportation improvements at the local, state and federal levels could help remedy these issues, according to TRIP, a nonprofit, national transportation research organization.

Those costs are in the form of extra vehicle operating costs caused by driving on damaged roads, lost time, lost fuel from congestion-related delays and the costs of traffic accidents likely caused by roadway features.

| Location | VOC | Congestion | Safety | TOTAL |
|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Baton Rouge | \$730 | \$1,011 | \$550 | \$2,291 |
| Lafayette | \$888 | \$691 | \$554 | \$2,133 |
| New Orleans | \$657 | \$1,103 | \$399 | \$2,159 |
| Shreveport | \$661 | \$653 | \$502 | \$1,816 |
| Louisiana Statewide | \$2.1 Billion | \$2.5 Billion | \$2.3 Billion | \$6.9 Billion |

Almost half of Louisiana’s major roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and 13% of locally and state-maintained bridges are rated poor or structurally deficient, a TRIP report reveals.

“We not only have to address the poor condition of our existing roads and bridges, we also need to look to the future and the new projects, like a new bridge in the Baton Rouge area that the capital region and the state desperately need,” Dow Chemical Southeast U.S. State Government Affairs Director Tommy Faucheux said.

Louisiana’s roads have the fifth highest fatality rate in the U.S., and Louisiana traffic crashes caused 3,683 deaths between 2013 and 2017, according to TRIP.