

TRIP: Arkansas Drivers Lose \$3.2 Billion Due to Bad Roads

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Roads and bridges that are deteriorated, congested, or lack some desirable [safety](#) features cost Arkansas motorists a total of \$3.2 billion statewide annually.

[TRIP](#), a Washington, DC-based national transportation research nonprofit, says the deficiencies cost Arkansas drivers as much as \$1,822 per driver in some urban areas due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes, and

congestion-related delays.

The nonprofit also says increased investment in transportation improvements at the local, state, and federal levels could relieve traffic congestion, improve road, bridge and transit conditions, boost safety, and support long-term economic growth in Arkansas.

TRIP's [report](#), "Arkansas Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State's Need for Safe, Smooth, and Efficient Mobility," finds that throughout Arkansas, more than half of major locally and state-maintained roads are in poor or mediocre condition, five percent of locally and state-maintained bridges (20 feet or more in length) are rated poor/structurally deficient, and 2,551 people lost their lives on the state's roads from 2014-2018.

Arkansas' major urban roads are becoming increasingly congested, causing significant delays and choking commuting and commerce. The TRIP report includes regional pavement and bridge conditions, congestion data, highway safety data, and cost breakdowns for the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Fort Smith, Hot Springs, Jonesboro, Little Rock-North Little Rock- Conway, Pine Bluff, and West Memphis urban areas and statewide.

"The findings of the TRIP report reaffirm the fact that the economic growth of our region and the quality of life of our residents is directly linked to the condition, safety and efficiency of our transportation system," said Joe Quinn, executive director of the Arkansas Good Roads Foundation. "Adequate investment in improving our roads and bridges puts Arkansans to work today and creates a lasting asset for future generations."

Driving on deficient Arkansas roads costs motorists a total of \$3.2 billion per year in the form of extra vehicle operating costs as a result of driving on roads in need of repair, lost time, and fuel due to congestion-related delays, and the costs of traffic crashes in which roadway features likely were a contributing factor.

The TRIP report finds that 26 percent of major locally and state-maintained roads in Arkansas are in poor condition and another 26 percent are in mediocre condition, costing the state's motorists an additional \$1.6 billion each year in extra vehicle operating costs, including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear.

Traffic congestion in Arkansas is worsening, causing up to 48 annual hours of delay for some motorists and costing drivers as much as \$711 annually in lost time and wasted fuel. Statewide, drivers lose \$780 million annually as a result of lost time and wasted fuel due to traffic congestion.

Traffic crashes in Arkansas claimed the lives 2,551 people between 2014 and 2018. Arkansas' overall traffic fatality rate of 1.41 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel in 2018 is the 12th highest in the nation and significantly higher than the national average of 1.13. Statewide, the financial impact of traffic crashes in which the lack of adequate roadway safety features were likely a contributing factor was \$780 million.

Five percent of Arkansas' bridges are rated poor/structurally deficient, with significant deterioration to the bridge deck, supports or other major components. Forty-four percent of the state's bridges are rated in fair condition and the remaining 51 percent are in good condition.

Source: TRIP