

Bad roads cost each Asheville-area driver about \$1,300 a year

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According to the TRIP report, driving on roads in the Asheville urban area costs the average driver \$1,280 per year in the form of extra vehicle operating costs as a result of driving on roads in need of repair. (Photo credit: WLOS staff)

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (WLOS) — A new report showed Asheville-area drivers lose nearly \$1,300 a year on bad roads. That includes roads that are rough, congested and lack safety features.

The report, released by TRIP, a Washington, DC-based national transportation research nonprofit, said those issues led to higher operating costs, crashes and delays.

Experts said the state relies on the gas tax to pay for road repairs and those funds are shrinking.

"There are cars out there now that don't pay gas tax. But, they're still using the roads. And so, we've got to figure out a way to get there.

And technology offers an opportunity here," NCOT board member Chuck McGrady said.

The TRIP report, "[North Carolina Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State's Need for Safe, Smooth and Efficient Mobility](#)," found that 10 percent of major locally- and state-maintained roads in the Asheville urban area are in poor condition and another 17 percent are in mediocre condition, costing the average motorist an additional \$339 each year in extra vehicle operating costs, including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. Statewide, 14 percent of North Carolina's major roads are in poor condition and 23 percent are in mediocre condition.

In the Asheville urban area, 8 percent of bridges are rated poor/structurally deficient, with significant deterioration to the bridge deck, supports or other major components. Statewide, 9 percent of North Carolina's bridges are rated poor/structurally deficient and 52 percent are rated in fair condition.

According to the report, driving on roads in the Asheville urban area costs the average driver \$1,280 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 the lack of adequate roadway features likely were a contributing factor.

"These conditions are only going to get worse, increasing the additional costs to motorists, if greater investment is not made available at the federal, state and local levels of government," Dave Kearby, TRIP's executive director, said in a news release. "Without adequate funding, North Carolina's transportation system will become increasingly deteriorated and congested, hampering economic growth, safety and quality of life."