TRIP report provides clarity on road conditions, costs for motorists in Beckley

By [Jake Karalexis](#)

BECKLEY, WV (WOAY) – Roads and bridges that lack desirable safety features cost motorists in West Virginia $1.6 billion statewide annually.

A report from TRIP transportation finds that 19% of major locally and state-maintained roads in urban Beckley are in poor condition.

"The average motorist in the Beckley spends an additional $1,299 annually in the cost of driving on rough roads," said TRIP Director of Policy and Research Rocky Moretti. "[And] the value of lost time and wasted fuel due to traffic congestion."

A lack of funding regarding transportation safety features could lead to further deterioration, increased congestion and higher costs to motorists. Road conditions in Beckley cost the average motorist over $500 per year in extra vehicle operating costs.

"In the Beckley area, 23% of the region's bridges are structurally deficient and in need of immediate repairs," Moretti said.

Traffic accidents throughout the state have claimed 1,394 lives over the past five years. The financial impact of traffic crashes has also been felt in the Beckley area.

"Over the last five years, on average there have been 15 people killed annually in traffic crashes," Moretti said. "We know that roadway safety features can be very helpful in improving traffic safety."

A 2015 report from the West Virginia Blue Ribbon Commission on Highways concluded that the state needed to increase its annual investment in its highway and bridge system by $1.1 billion annually to improve the transportation system. While investments have increased, there are still traffic issues throughout the state that have trickled down to Beckley.

"Motorists are spending on average an additional eight hours annually stuck in traffic due to traffic congestion in the region," Moretti said.

The goal remains to continue to improve conditions, while decreasing costs to motorists, through greater investment at the federal, state and local levels of government.