



TRIP Connecticut Report: CONNECTICUT MOTORISTS LOSE \$6 BILLION ANNUALLY ON ROADS THAT ARE ROUGH, CONGESTED & LACK SOME SAFETY FEATURES

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UP TO \$2,120 PER DRIVER IN SOME AREAS. CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FACES \$400 MILLION ANNUAL FUNDING SHORTFALL FOR NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS

Roads and bridges that are deteriorated, congested or lack some desirable safety features cost Connecticut motorists a total of \$6 billion statewide annually – as much as \$2,120 per driver in some urban areas – due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes and congestion-related delays. 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 short- and long-term economic growth in Connecticut, according to a new report released today by [TRIP](#), a Washington, DC based national transportation research nonprofit.

The TRIP report, "[Transportation's Vital Role in Connecticut's Recovery](#)," finds that throughout Connecticut, 62 percent of major locally and state-maintained roads are in poor or mediocre condition, six percent of locally and state-maintained bridges (20 feet or more in length) are rated poor/structurally deficient, and 1,380 people lost their lives on the state's roads from 2015-2019. Connecticut's major urban roads are congested, causing significant delays and choking commuting and commerce.

Driving on deficient Connecticut roads costs the state's drivers a total of \$6 billion per year in the form of extra vehicle operating costs (VOC) 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. The report includes regional pavement and bridge conditions, highway safety data, and cost breakdowns for the Bridgeport-Stamford, Hartford and New Haven urban areas and statewide. A breakdown of the costs per motorist in the state's largest urban areas, along with a statewide total, is below.

Location	VOC	Congestion	Safety	TOTAL
Bridgeport-Stamford	\$651	\$1,037	\$423	\$2,111
Hartford	\$615	\$922	\$583	\$2,120
New Haven	\$571	\$802	\$714	\$2,087
CONNECTICUT STATEWIDE	\$1.9 Billion	\$2.6 Billion	\$1.5 Billion	\$6 Billion



The TRIP report finds that 34 percent of major locally and state-maintained roads in

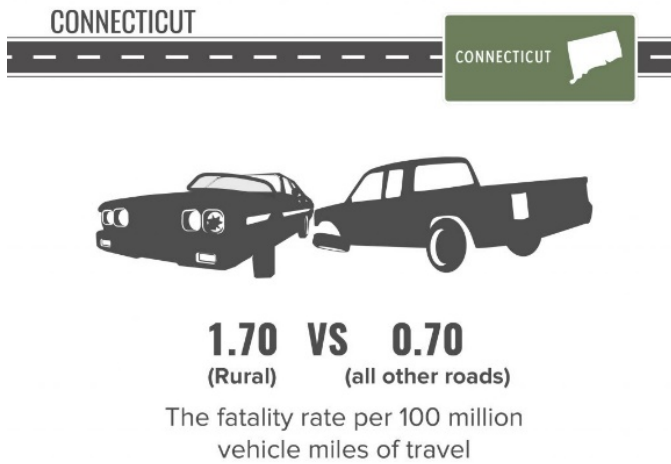
Connecticut are in poor condition and another 28 percent are in mediocre condition, costing the state's motorists an additional \$1.9 billion each year in extra vehicle operating costs, including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. Seventeen percent of the state's major roads are in fair condition and the remaining 21 percent are in good condition.

Six percent of Connecticut's bridges are rated poor/structurally deficient, with significant deterioration to the bridge deck, supports or other major components. Sixty-six percent of the state's bridges are rated in fair condition and the remaining 29 percent are in good condition. Most bridges are designed to last 50 years before major overhaul or replacement, although many newer bridges are being designed to last 75 years or longer. In Connecticut, 62 percent of the state's bridges were built in 1969 or earlier – the fourth highest share in the nation.

"It's hardly news that Connecticut's transportation infrastructure needs improvements," said Connecticut State Senator Will Haskell, senate chair of the Connecticut General Assembly Transportation Committee. "But this report sheds light on the depth and breadth of the problem. Now that we can see a light at the end of the tunnel, it's time to redouble our commitment to getting Connecticut moving again. More specifically, we know that investing in public transit will create jobs and reduce carbon emissions. In my new role as the Senate Chair of the Transportation Committee, I look forward to advocating for a 21st century infrastructure network."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, vehicle travel in Connecticut dropped by as much as 51 percent in April 2020 (as compared to vehicle travel during the same month the previous year), but rebounded to 17 percent below the previous year's volume in December 2020. Congested roads choke commuting and commerce and cost Connecticut drivers \$2.6 billion each year in the form of lost time and wasted fuel. In the most congested urban areas, drivers lose up to \$1,037 and spend as many as 57 hours per year sitting in congestion.

“As the advocacy organization for the motoring public, the TRIP report findings that the majority of Connecticut’s roadways are in ‘poor or mediocre condition’ are extremely troubling,” says Amy Parmenter, spokesperson for the AAA Allied Group. “AAA research indicates that one third of U.S. drivers are unable to pay for unexpected vehicle repairs, suggesting that thousands of dollars in damage would leave them stranded, without transportation that may be critical to their livelihood. Connecticut must do better.”



From 2015 to 2019, 1,380 people were killed in traffic crashes in Connecticut. In 2019, Connecticut had 0.79 traffic fatalities for every 100 million miles traveled, lower than the national average of 1.11. The traffic fatality rate on Connecticut’s rural, non-Interstate roadways in 2019 was approximately two-and-a-half times higher than on all other roads (1.70 per 100 million vehicle miles of travel vs. 0.70). From 2015 to 2019, there were 267 pedestrian and 16 bicycle fatalities in Connecticut, 21 percent of the total number of traffic fatalities in the state. Traffic crashes imposed a total of \$4.5 billion in economic costs in Connecticut in 2019 and traffic crashes in which a lack of adequate roadway safety features were likely a contributing factor imposed \$1.5 billion in economic costs.

The efficiency and condition of Connecticut’s transportation system, particularly its highways, is critical to the health of the state’s economy. Annually, \$306 billion in goods are shipped to and from Connecticut, relying heavily on the state’s network of roads and bridges. Increasingly, companies are looking at the quality of a region’s transportation system when deciding where to re-locate or expand. Regions with congested or poorly maintained roads may see

businesses relocate to areas with a smoother, more efficient and more modern transportation system. Approximately 731,000 full-time jobs in Connecticut in key industries like tourism, retail sales, agriculture and manufacturing are dependent on the quality, safety and reliability of the state’s transportation infrastructure network.

“The TRIP report provides ample substantiation for many valid concerns related to the poor condition of our nation’s, region’s and state’s multi-modal transportation network, as did the many similar reports produced over the years by AASHTO, APTA, the TRB and many others,” said Kevin Grigg, executive committee member of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association and president and CEO of Fuss & O’Neill, Inc. “It is well past time that we step-up and take seriously our various responsibilities to ensure the level of safety and economic vibrancy that our citizens have come to expect from our transportation system. As a result, I heartily endorse the report’s clarion call for the increased, dedicated and secure funding needed to return our transportation infrastructure to at least a state of good repair.”

A lack of sufficient funding at the local, state and federal levels will make it difficult to adequately maintain and improve the state’s existing transportation system. The Connecticut Department of Transportation estimates that its current investment in road, highway and bridge repairs is \$400 million less than is needed annually to allow the state to improve the condition of its roads, highways and bridges to a state of good repair. Connecticut’s challenge to improve the reliability, condition and safety of its roads, highways and bridges is threatened by a significant reduction in highway investment starting in 2021.

“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,” said Dave Kearby, TRIP’s executive director. “Without adequate funding, Connecticut’s transportation system will become increasingly deteriorated and congested, hampering economic growth, safety and quality of life.”



Transportation’s Vital Role in Connecticut’s Recovery

CONNECTICUT KEY TRANSPORTATION FACTS

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF DEFICIENT ROADS

Driving on Connecticut roads that are deteriorated, congested and that lack some desirable safety features costs Connecticut drivers a total of \$6 billion each year. TRIP has calculated the cost to the average motorist in the state’s largest urban areas in the form of additional vehicle operating costs (VOC) as a result of driving on rough roads, the cost of lost time and wasted fuel due to congestion, and the financial cost of traffic crashes. The chart below shows the cost of deficient roads statewide and for the average driver in the state’s largest urban areas.

CONNECTICUT ROADS PROVIDE A ROUGH RIDE

Due to inadequate state and local funding, nearly two-thirds of major roads and highways in Connecticut are in poor or mediocre condition. Driving

Location	Poor	Mediocre	Fair	Good
Bridgeport-Stamford	32%	24%	18%	26%
Hartford	28%	27%	17%	28%
New Haven	24%	28%	18%	30%
CONNECTICUT STATEWIDE	34%	28%	17%	21%

on rough roads costs the average Connecticut driver \$711 annually in additional vehicle operating costs – a total of \$1.9 billion statewide. The chart below details pavement conditions on major roads in the state's largest urban areas and statewide.

CONNECTICUT BRIDGE CONDITIONS

Six percent of Connecticut's bridges are rated in poor/structurally deficient condition, meaning there is significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports or other major components. Sixty-six percent of the state's bridges are rated in fair condition and the remaining 29 percent are in good condition. Most bridges are designed to last 50 years before major overhaul or replacement, although many newer bridges are being designed to last 75 years or longer. In Connecticut, 62 percent of the state's bridges were built in 1969 or earlier – the fourth highest share in the nation. The chart below details bridge conditions statewide and in the state's largest urban areas.

	POOR/STRUCTURALLY DEFICIENT		FAIR		GOOD		TOTAL BRIDGES
	Number	Share	Number	Share	Number	Share	
Bridgeport-Stamford	54	6%	617	72%	189	22%	860
Hartford	47	5%	612	67%	261	28%	920
New Haven	46	5%	576	65%	269	30%	891
CONNECTICUT STATEWIDE	248	6%	2,861	66%	1,248	29%	4,357

CONNECTICUT ROADS ARE INCREASINGLY CONGESTED

In 2019, the state's transportation system carried 31.6 billion annual vehicle miles of travel

(VMT). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, vehicle travel in Connecticut dropped by as much as 51 percent in April 2020 (as compared to vehicle travel during the same month the previous year), but rebounded to 17 percent below the previous year's volume in December 2020. Congested roads choke commuting and commerce and cost Connecticut drivers \$2.6 billion each year in the form of lost time and wasted fuel. In the most congested urban areas, drivers lose up to \$1,037 and spend as many as 57 hours per year sitting in congestion. The chart below shows the annual number of hours lost to congestion per driver and the average cost per driver of lost time and wasted fuel due to congestion in the state's largest urban areas.

Location	Hours Lost to Congestion	Annual Cost Per Driver
Bridgeport-Stamford	57	\$1,037
Hartford	50	\$922
New Haven	45	\$802

CONNECTICUT TRAFFIC SAFETY AND FATALITIES

Year	Total Fatalities	Pedestrian Fatalities	Bicycle Fatalities	Share Bike and Ped.
2015	266	46	3	18%
2016	293	59	6	22%
2017	278	49	3	19%
2018	294	59	1	20%
2019	294	54	3	23%
TOTAL	1,380	267	16	21%
AVERAGE	276	53	3	21%

From 2015 to 2019, 1,380 people were killed in traffic crashes in Connecticut. In 2019, Connecticut had 0.79 traffic fatalities for every 100 million miles traveled, lower than the national average of 1.11. The traffic fatality rate on Connecticut's rural, non-Interstate roadways in 2019 was approximately two-and-a-half times higher than on all other roads (1.70 per 100

million vehicle miles of travel vs. 0.70). From 2015 to 2019, there were 267 pedestrian and 16 bicycle fatalities in Connecticut, 21 percent of the total number of traffic fatalities in the state.

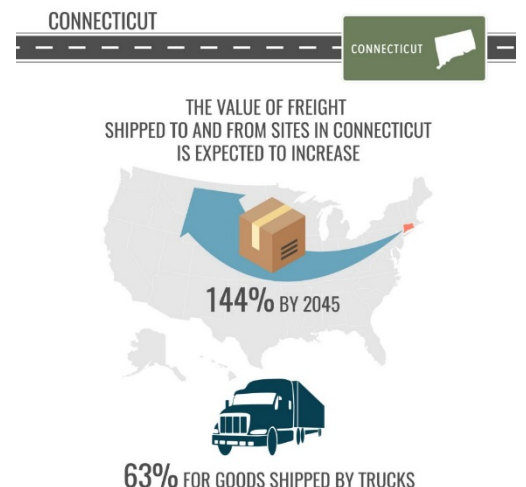
Traffic crashes imposed a total of \$4.5 billion in economic costs in Connecticut in 2019 and traffic crashes in which a lack of adequate roadway safety features were likely a contributing factor imposed \$1.5 billion in economic costs. The chart below shows the number of people killed in traffic crashes in the state's largest urban areas between 2015 and 2019, and the cost of traffic crashes per driver.

Location	Average Fatalities 2015-2019	Safety Cost
Bridgeport-Stamford	49	\$423
Hartford	63	\$583
New Haven	74	\$714

TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The health and future growth of Connecticut's economy is riding on its transportation system. Each year, \$306 billion in goods are shipped to and from sites in Connecticut, mostly by trucks. Increases in passenger and freight movement will place further burdens on the state's already deteriorated and congested network of roads and bridges. The value of freight shipped to and from sites in Connecticut, in inflation-adjusted dollars, is expected to increase 144 percent by 2045 and by 63 percent for goods shipped by trucks.

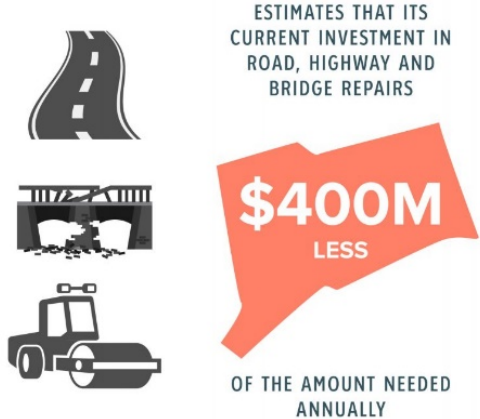
According to a [report by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association](#), the design, construction and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in Connecticut supports approximately 38,000 full-time jobs across all sectors of the state economy. These workers earn \$1.9 billion annually. Approximately 731,000 million full-time jobs in Connecticut in key industries like tourism, retail sales, agriculture and manufacturing are completely dependent on the state's transportation network.



CONNECTICUT TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

CTDOT

THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Investment in Connecticut's roads, highways and bridges is funded by local, state and federal governments. A lack of sufficient funding at all levels will make it difficult to adequately maintain and improve the state's existing transportation system.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation estimates that its current investment in road, highway and bridge repairs is \$400 million less than is needed annually to allow the state to improve the condition of its roads, highways and bridges to a state of good repair. Connecticut's challenge to improve the reliability, condition and safety of its roads, highways and bridges is threatened by a significant reduction in highway investment starting in 2021.

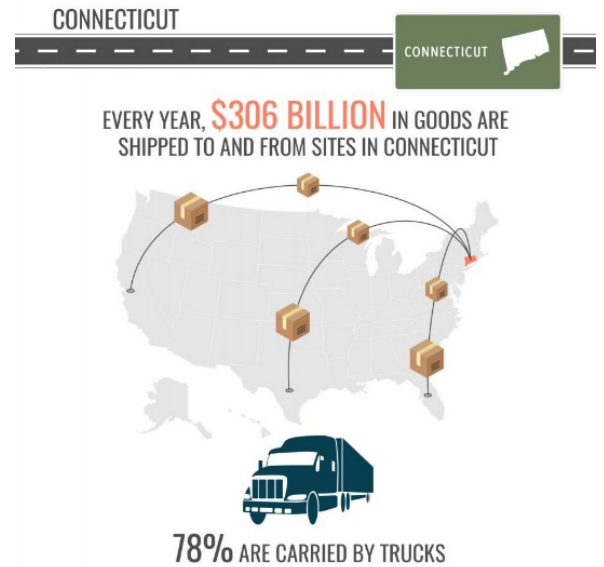
The ability of revenue from Connecticut's motor fuel tax – a critical source of state transportation funds – to keep pace with the state's future transportation needs is likely to erode as a result of increasing vehicle fuel efficiency and the increasing use of electric vehicles. The average fuel efficiency of U.S. passenger vehicles increased from 20 miles per gallon in 2010 to 24.5 miles per gallon in 2020. Average fuel efficiency is expected to increase another 31 percent by 2030, to 32 miles per gallon, and increase 51 percent by 2040, to 37 miles per gallon. The share of electric vehicles of total passenger vehicle sales in the U.S. is expected to increase to five percent by 2023 and to 60 percent by 2040,

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by which time they will represent approximately 30 percent of the passenger vehicle fleet.

The current federal transportation legislation, [Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act \(FAST Act\)](#), was set to expire on September 30, 2020. Congress extended it by one year to September 30, 2021. The FAST Act is a major source of funding for road, highway and bridge repairs in Connecticut. Throughout the FAST-Act – fiscal years 2016 to 2021 – the program provided \$3.2 billion to Connecticut for road repairs and improvements, an average of \$535 million per year.

Sources of information for this report include the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), the U.S. Census Bureau, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Cover photo credit: Connecticut Department of Transportation.



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