



Poor transportation infrastructure costs New Mexicans \$2.7B annually

By [Melina Druga](#) | March 8, 2021



© Shutterstock

Congested and deteriorated roads and bridges, as well as those that lack some safety features, cost New Mexico motorists \$2.7 billion statewide annually in delays, traffic crashes, and vehicle operating costs.

Five percent of the state's locally and state-maintained bridges measuring 20 feet or more in length are rated poor/structurally deficient, more than half of major locally and state-maintained roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and 1,894 people died on the roads from 2015 to 2019, according to a report by TRIP, a Washington, D.C.-based national transportation research nonprofit organization. In addition, congested urban roads caused significant delays in commuting and commerce.

According to the New Mexico Department of Transportation, nearly \$2.8 billion is needed to make significant changes and maintenance, but these transportation projects are not funded.

The state's transportation system carried 27.8 billion annual vehicle miles of travel in 2019, a 22 percent increase since 2000. In April 2020, vehicle travel dropped by as much as 41 percent compared to April 2019 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. By November, vehicle travel was back to only 10 percent less than the previous year.