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THE HIGH COST OF BAD ROADS

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Study: Poor road, bridge conditions cost Shreveport drivers \$2K per year

Scott Ferrell | Shreveport Times
 Published April 15, 2021



File photo *Henrietta Wildsmith/The Times*
 Driving in Shreveport is coming at a higher cost for local residents.

The Transportation Research Nonprofit produced a new report that shows Shreveport drivers spending more than \$2,100 annually because of poor roads and bridges, traffic congestion and lack of some desirable safety features.



Louisiana's roads are ranked as the second worst in the nation by Consumer Affairs. *Henrietta Wildsmith/The Times/ File Photo*
 "The TRIP Report finds that in the Shreveport area, motorists on average are spending an additional \$2,135 annually -- the cost of driving on rough roads, the value of lost time and fuel due to traffic congestion and the economic cost of serious and fatal traffic crashes where the lack of adequate roadway safety features were a

contributing factor," TRIP Director of Research and Policy Rocky Moretti said.

The cost of operating vehicles on Shreveport's roads was an additional \$878 per year. That figure is the largest among Louisiana's four largest metropolitan areas (New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport and Lafayette.)

The TRIP report found 45% of major locally and state-maintained roads in the Shreveport area are in poor condition and another 31% are in mediocre condition.

As for bridges, 11% of bridges in the Shreveport area are rated poor/structurally deficient, with significant deterioration to the bridge deck, supports or other major components.

Traffic congestion in the Shreveport area causes 28 annual hours of delay and 15 gallons of wasted fuel for the average motorist, costing the average Shreveport driver \$694 annually in lost time and wasted fuel.

Shreveport's total is the lowest among the state's four-largest metro areas. Costs in Baton Rouge and New Orleans are both more than \$1,200 to drivers annually and Lafayette is at \$738.

Safety has also been costly for Shreveport drivers. The report showed the Shreveport area having, on average, 49 people killed in traffic crashes each year from 2015 to 2019. The financial impact of traffic crashes in which the lack of adequate roadway safety features, while not the primary cause, were likely a contributing factor was an average of \$563 annually per each Shreveport area driver. That figure is second in Louisiana only behind Baton Rouge (\$614)

TRIP officials expect those costs to rise if nothing is done to address those areas in the future.

"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," TRIP Executive Director Dave Kearby said. "Without adequate funding, Louisiana's transportation system will become increasingly

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