

# New Report: Half of state's most congested interstates found in the Charleston area

by Charistin Clark | Wednesday, September 22nd 2021



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CHARLESTON, S.C. (WCIV) — A new report reveals five of the 10 most congested interstate segments in South Carolina are in the Charleston area. The data comes from a non-profit, transportation focused group known as "TRIP." That report outlines how much money local roads are costing drivers as they hit the road again.

"Travel is back in South Carolina and we anticipate seeing traffic congestion levels returning to pre-pandemic levels or actually exceeding them," said TRIP Director of Policy and Research Rocky Moretti.

But the state still faces challenges in addressing the needs of its transportation system.

"Our biggest challenges are driven by missed opportunity, which is growth. While South Carolina does a tremendous job of attracting people and businesses to our state, we're not financially prepared to deal with increasing demands that is associated with this growth," said South Carolina Alliance to Fix Our Roads Executive Director Jennifer Patterson.

According to the TRIP report, drivers are wasting \$2.1 billion in lost time and fuel due to congestion. Many of those drivers are in the Charleston area.

"In the Charleston area, the report finds the average motorist is losing an addition \$1,165 annually due to traffic congestion as a result of spending 56 hours annually stuck in traffic and wasting 22 gallons of fuel annually," said Moretti.

Moretti says local drivers are also dealing with other road hazards.

"The TRIP report finds that in the Charleston area, 16% of major roadways have pavements in poor condition and 28% are in mediocre condition," said Moretti.

Since 2018, South Carolina DOT officials say they have started about 4,000 miles of paving projects statewide. Work crews have also begun repairs on 211 of the 465 bridges that were rated poorly.

South Carolina DOT has a 10 year plan in place to improve the state's transportation system.

According to DOT officials, state and federal lawmakers are considering new one time funding for roads. They believe it would greatly improve road conditions as rapid growth continues across the state.