

New study breaks down how South Carolina roads need to accommodate growth



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ACROSS SOUTH CAROLINA, (WSPA) – A new report shows the state of South Carolina, which is one of the fastest growing states in the country, struggles to accommodate the influx in commuters.

Trip, a national research non-profit, released a study that served as a break down of where the state is at and if it's able to move forward in terms of providing an efficient, safe, reliable, transportation system for the state of South Carolina.

Several agencies came together for news conference Wednesday to address some of the findings in the report.

According to Trip, transportation levels in the

South Carolina are continuing to get back to pre-pandemic volumes, which presents new challenges to our commutes and our commerce.

In addressing this demand for maintaining the system that's getting increasingly more travel, Director of Policy and Research for Trip, Rockey Moretti, said in 2017 the South Carolina Legislature approved Act 40.

"Which has allowed a 72-percent increase in the state's investment in roads, highways, and bridges," said Moretti.

He added that funding has been critical, but not enough.

Even with added monies, SCDOT estimates the Palmetto State will face an annual \$403-million dollar gap in funds needed to make some of those improvements.

"And while South Carolina does a tremendous job of attracting people and businesses to our state, we're not financially prepared to deal with the increase in demands that's associated with this growth," said Executive Director for South Carolina Alliance to Fix our Roads, Jennifer Patterson.

She said there are options.

"Right now there's two immediate funding opportunities on the horizon that would have profound impacts on South Carolina, and the first is the passage of the [bipartisan infrastructure plan](#) that's pending in Congress," said Patterson.

She explained an increase in population puts stress on our roads and business.

"When we have the number of restricted bridges that we have, we're finding that our folks hauling grain, hauling logs, hauling poultry, and processed goods around the state are having to divert routes 10, 20, 30 miles to get around," said CEO for the Palmetto Agribusiness Council, Ronnie Summers.

"People don't really like the trucks but they want their stuff. And so we've got to figure out a way to safely and efficiently accommodate the freight and services by truck," said President and CEO for the South Carolina Trucking Association, Rick Todd.

Todd added that as consumers we need to consider that to be competitive, our public infrastructure not only has to be maintained but has got to be expanded and modernized.

"Now modernizing, we need to incorporate expensive, intelligent, transportation systems because we're going to have autonomous vehicles coming on to the scene as we move forward," Todd said. "And a lot of the times the roadway systems can accommodate that. And we need velocity safety better designed interchanges and more easily recognized signage. We need larger and safer rest areas that's for interstate travelers, vacationers, and particularly truckers who have limited hours of service operations and have federally mandated rest periods."

According to Trip, South Carolina will need to look for opportunities to increase transportation investment from all levels of government to maintain safe and reliable systems that can continue to support the state's growing economy and way of life.

To learn more about the study released by Trip, [click here](#).