

## How much is Lexington traffic costing you?



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LEXINGTON, Ky. (LEX 18) — A new report revealed the hidden costs of traffic and poorly-maintained roads in central Kentucky. The National Transportation Research Nonprofit - known as "TRIP" - released a study Tuesday calculating what that means financially.

"In Lexington, TRIP estimates at the average motor suspending an additional 35 hours annually stuck in traffic and wasting 19 gallons of fuel annually due to traffic congestion," said Ricky Moretti, Director of Policy and Research at TRIP.

Traffic in the Lexington area has increased since before the pandemic, he said. That time people lose while stuck in traffic could be used in more productive ways, Moretti said. TRIP puts the cost per person of those congested roads at 809 dollars a year.

"To me, it's not worth it, it's not worth the money it takes to maintain a car," said Samuel Whitter, who said the amount of traffic in and around Lexington contributes to the reason he chooses not to drive.

It can be expensive to maintain cars. According to TRIP, on average someone living in the Lexington area spends 306 dollars annually operating their car. They say poor roads are partially to blame.

According to TRIP, 7% of roads in the Lexington area are rated as poor, 13% are mediocre. TRIP also looks at deaths due to traffic crashes. An average of 68 people in the Lexington area die each year in traffic crashes.

"While most of these traffic crashes or serious traffic crashes ultimately are not the result of the condition of the roadway, we do know that when roadway safety features are provided that we see a significant improvement in traffic safety," Moretti said.

The cost of traffic crashes per driver is nearly 400 dollars a year, per TRIP.

People who drive cars in Lexington lose more than \$1,500 a year on roads that are rough, congested, and lack some safety features, TRIP says.

LEX18 reached out to The Kentucky Department of Transportation to get their response to the report. They provided the following statement:

"The TRIP report's findings are well known to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, which is why this administration has fought for more road funding and in the 2022-2028 Recommended Highway Plan we put deficient bridges and pavements at the top of the priority list. The recommended plan, which now is before the General Assembly, would provide \$3.6 billion – nearly \$600 million per year over six years – to address a backlog of deficient bridges and needed pavement repairs. The Governor continues to place importance on safety projects – evidenced by his decision to target school zones for \$23 million of highway safety projects, and his use of more than \$50 million in discretionary funding to repair local streets and county roads."