

A third of NC roads are in poor or mediocre condition

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Road Construction. Source: NCDOT

A new report shows that 33% of major roads in North Carolina are in poor or mediocre condition. [Published by TRIP](#), a National Transportation Research Nonprofit, the data comes from the N.C. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration and the U.S. Department of Transportation. 23% of the state’s major roads are in fair condition with the remainder, 44% being listed as “good.”

The TRIP report titled “Moving North Carolina Forward”, noted with decreases in overall funding for the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) these conditions are likely to get worse.

“North Carolina faces a significant challenge in providing a reliable, safe, and well-maintained transportation system,” according to Rocky Moretti, TRIP’s director of policy and research. “The state’s long-term transportation funding sustainability is threatened by a significant increase in highway construction inflation and also by the increasing fuel efficiency of vehicles and the increasing adoption of electric vehicles.”

The primary source of funding for [NCDOT is gasoline taxes](#), which are currently set at 40.5 cents per gallon of gas as of January 1st, 2023.

However, discussions have been ongoing in the state for several years regarding the need to find additional sources of funding for road and bridge projects. House Speaker Tim Moore and Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger [discussed this topic](#) at a Charlotte Regional Business Alliance forum earlier this year. In the 2022-2023 fiscal year state budget, \$193 million,

Location	Poor	Mediocre	Fair	Good
Asheville	11%	16%	19%	53%
Charlotte Metro	16%	28%	23%	33%
Raleigh-Durham	13%	25%	21%	42%
The Triad	12%	28%	20%	41%
Wilmington	16%	25%	21%	37%
North Carolina Statewide	10%	23%	23%	44%

Road conditions in North Carolina. Source TRIP’s 2023 “Moving North Carolina Forward” report

which represents about 2% of sales tax revenue, was transferred to NCDOT. This amount will increase to 4% this year and 6% by 2025.

The state of North Carolina has a significant problem with congested roads and bridges, which the report says results in a considerable waste of time and money. In the Raleigh-Durham area, drivers lose as many as 36 hours per year in traffic, while in the Charlotte metro area, this number is even higher, with drivers losing almost two full days at 47 hours.

Urban Area	Hours Lost to Congestion	Annual Cost Per Driver	Gallons of Fuel Wasted Per Driver
Asheville	26	\$687	10
Charlotte Metro	47	\$1,342	19
Raleigh-Durham	36	\$897	14
The Triad	26	\$580	11
Wilmington	26	\$646	11

Traffic congestion in North Carolina. Source TRIP’s 2023 “Moving North Carolina Forward” report

lifespan of a vehicle but also increases routine maintenance as well as additional fuel consumption and tire wear.” Statewide the average vehicle operating costs are \$484 per driver annually.

Statewide, bridges were in much better shape. TRIP estimates seven percent of North Carolina’s bridges are in poor/structurally deficient condition, defined as “Significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports or other major components.” 52 percent of the state’s bridges are rated in fair condition with the remainder, 41 percent, listed as good condition.

“The state’s transportation challenges will require that state and local governments continue to increase their investment in improving the safety, reliability, and condition of their transportation systems” said Moretti.

Read the full report [here](#)

The costs associated with these delays are substantial, with drivers in and around Mecklenburg County wasting 19 gallons of gas per year due to the extra time spent in traffic.

Conditions of major roadways is not only an issue for NCDOT, TRIP estimates it costs North Carolinians an additional 3.7 billion annually in vehicle operating costs. Moretti notes that “cost as you’re driving on rougher roads that’s accelerating vehicle depreciation which obviously reduces the



TRIP Moving North Carolina Forward News Conference. Source YouTube