



MOON SHOT SHOT

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Cleveland/Akron area has the worst roads of all Ohio cities, report says

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Massive potholes fill with water on Terrace Rd. in East Cleveland. The road was used as an access road during demolition of Huron Rd. Hospital and has not been repaired. The abandoned Huron Place Apartments, right, sit across the street. September 3, 2019 (Gus Chan / The Plain Dealer) The Plain Dealer

By [Lucas Daprile, cleveland.com](https://www.cleveland.com/lucas-daprile/)

CLEVELAND, Ohio – The Cleveland/Akron area has the worst roads and bridges of any major Ohio city.

Those are the findings of a recent report by [TRIP, a national transportation nonprofit](#) that represents unions and companies involved in highway construction.

When compared to Columbus, Cincinnati, Toledo and Dayton, the Cleveland/Akron area has the highest percentage of major roads that are considered “poor” (35%) or “mediocre” (22%). Statewide, 16% of roads are listed as “poor” and 15% are listed as “mediocre.” Conversely, the Cleveland/Akron area also has the lowest percentage of roads listed as “good,” (29%). Statewide, 55% of roads are listed as “good,” the highest ranking the report offers.

That poor road quality comes with a cost to motorists, said [Rocky Moretti, TRIP’s director of policy and research](#). For Cleveland/Akron motorists, driving on subpar roads costs an additional \$763 per year for drivers, a number that includes additional repair costs, increased fuel use,

repairing flat tires and the extent to which poor roads accelerate how quickly cars depreciate, according to the report.

“When pavements are rougher for vehicles, it has to work that much harder,” Moretti said. “So, it’s burning more gasoline and causing more tire wear.”

Bridges in the Cleveland/Akron area also lagged behind their Ohio peers. Compared to other Ohio cities, the Cleveland/Akron area had the highest rate (7%) of “structurally deficient” bridges, and the lowest rate of bridges in “good” condition (49%), according to the report.

One area in which Cleveland/Akron was ahead of some peers was in traffic congestion. Cleveland/Akron drivers waste fewer annual hours (40) in traffic than Columbus (46) or Cincinnati (48), according to the report.

The report also identified some future issues that could complicate efforts to build and maintain the state’s highway system. One of those is electric cars. While Moretti spoke positively about electric cars not having the same tailpipe emissions gas and diesel-powered cars have, those drivers are also not paying gas tax – 38.5 cents per gallon for gasoline and 47 cents per gallon of diesel -- which is used to fund road construction.

The report doesn’t address how to compensate for the potential loss in tax revenue, but merely notes it will be an issue that needs addressing in the coming years. Another issue holding back road construction, despite funding from both parties in Columbus and Washington, is high inflation.

Between the beginning of 2022 and the first half of 2023, labor and materials needed to build highways increased 36%, according to the report.

“That inflation has taken a bite out of the state and federal money,” Moretti said.