

## Report: Local roads cost drivers \$3,000 per year

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — A new report shows those rough roads you experience in New Mexico are also pretty rough on your wallet.

According to the national transportation research nonprofit TRIP, drivers in our state spend an average of two days a year stuck in traffic. That is from construction or other bottlenecked areas.

That report also states that 32% of our roads are in poor condition. Meanwhile, 21% of them are in mediocre condition.

All of this means shops, like Old Town Tire and Automotive in Albuquerque, do a lot of tire repairs throughout the year.

“We actually see it quite a bit because there are a lot of potholes unfortunately throughout our state,” shop owner Alex Ochoa said.

State lawmakers plan to use this report to determine what they need to address at the Legislature.

According to Senate Majority Whip Michael Padilla, one major infrastructure project in the works is the Rio Bravo Bridge.

“This is a bridge that is actually two bridges, and one of them is about to fall into the river. So we are always repairing it. We’re constantly putting money into it to ensure its safety. We actually have to take that entire bridge out,” Padilla said.

The report also states our roads cost each driver, on average, \$3,000 a year. That is money spent on repairs, like pothole damages and serious crashes, as well as gas wasted in traffic backups.

State Rep. Dayan Hochman-Vigil says they’re using this report to have funding for preventative projects on our roads, instead of more extensive and expensive aftercare.

“Right now, NMDOT has the Road Fund. It is used for everything from filling potholes to giving people salary raises. That system is simply not working for us anymore,” Rep. Hochman-Vigil said.

The report also states, that from 2018-22, over 2,000 people died in traffic crashes in New Mexico.