

## Colorado road conditions summit discusses conditions of our state's transportation system



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January 27, 2025

COLORADO SPRINGS — Last week, a summit was held to discuss the conditions of Colorado's transportation system and traffic safety.

Rocky Moretti, the Director of Policy and Research at TRIP, a transportation nonprofit based in Washington, D.C., led the summit.

The latest data from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation looked at the following:

- condition of Colorado's transportation system
- levels of reliability and traffic congestion on that system
- importance of freight
- latest trends and importance of traffic safety on Colorado's transportation system

During the summit, Moretti said there is a significant increase in the rate of inflation for highway construction work, including improving roads and bridges, that have dented the impact of additional funding due to a significant drop in travel during the COVID pandemic. According to the latest data from CDOT, the state is facing a \$350 million shortfall annually.

Moretti said these efforts are being hampered by a 45% increase in highway construction costs since 2022.

The report findings show motorists in the Colorado Springs area are losing around \$2,500 annual due to the following:

- cost of driving on roads that are deteriorated

- driving on roads that are congested
- roads that lack some needed roadway safety features

According to the report, 24% of major roads and highways in Colorado have pavements in poor condition, and 41% are rated in fair condition. In Colorado Springs, the report found 28% of major roadways had pavements in poor condition and another 46% were rated in fair condition. The report also looked at bridge conditions, noting 5% of bridges in Colorado are in poor condition, and 65% are rated in either fair condition, or fair condition but need additional repairs to ensure they don't slip into poor condition.

In 2023, News5 Investigates looked at the 25 bad bridges in southern Colorado.

In November, questions swirled on social media about drivers and pedestrian safety after the City of Colorado Springs shared a photo of a titled rocker bearing on the Fillmore Street bridge in Colorado Springs. The maintenance project was completed last month.

The report also looked at traffic safety in Colorado. Moretti says across the country, there is a significant traffic safety crisis as many people have been killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes.

In Colorado, from 2019 to 2023, there were almost 4,000 traffic deaths. The report found from 2018 to 2022, there was an average of around 80 people killed annually in traffic crashes in the Colorado Springs area.