

Colorado criticized by East Coast nonprofit, says poor infrastructure costing drivers thousands of dollars

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COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (KRDO) -- If someone told you that driving on bad roads and bridges was costing you \$2,610 annually, would you believe it?

That's the assertion in a new study released Wednesday by *TRIP*, a nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C.



The study -- "[Keeping Colorado Mobile: Meeting the State's Need for Safe, Smooth and Efficient Mobility](#)," -- finds that the above amount is the average figure paid by Colorado Springs drivers in higher operating costs for damage to vehicles, crashes, a lack of safety measures and time lost in traffic congestion.



"Traffic congestion in the Colorado Springs area results in the average commuter spending an extra 54 hours annually stuck in traffic, and using an extra 21 gallons of fuel," said Rocky Moretti, a *TRIP* researcher.



According to the study, the city ranks second behind Denver and ahead of Pueblo for the average infrastructure cost to drivers; Grand Junction has the lowest cost.

Location	VOC	Safety	Congestion	TOTAL
Colorado Springs	\$787	\$555	\$1,268	\$2,610
Denver	\$901	\$484	\$1,675	\$3,060
Grand Junction	\$787	\$591	\$326	\$1,704
Northern Colorado	\$843	\$617	\$639	\$2,099
Pueblo	\$621	\$983	\$827	\$2,431
Colorado Statewide	\$3.7 Billion	\$2.9 Billion	\$4.8 Billion	\$11.4 Billion

TRIP said that inadequate infrastructure costs the state \$11.4 billion every year.

The study states: "*Throughout Colorado, nearly a quarter of major locally and state-maintained roads are in poor condition, five percent of locally and state-maintained bridges (20 feet or more in length) are rated poor/structurally deficient, traffic congestion is choking commuting and commerce, and the state's traffic fatality rate has increased significantly since 2019. Despite recent increases in state and federal transportation funding, CDOT projects a \$350 million per year shortfall in funding needed to maintain and enhance the system.*"



KRDO 13's *The Road Warrior* asked Gayle Sturdivant, the deputy public works director for Colorado Springs, to respond to the study.



"It's hard to say whether we think the results are accurate without doing our own analysis of the data," she explained. "They've stated that their report is based on data from CDOT (Colorado Department of Transportation). In Colorado Springs, we make different choices on investing in our roadway system."

For example, Sturdivant mentioned the 2C expanded street paving program and the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority -- two funding sources from voter-approved sales tax increases -- that support infrastructure improvements.



"The study may not be aware of that," she said. "It also may not realize that some of the city's busiest roads are actually state highways -- such as Powers Boulevard (Highway 21) and Cimarron Street (US 24).

The study also indicates that its research applies to "the Colorado Springs urban area," which could include neighboring counties such as Teller and Fremont.



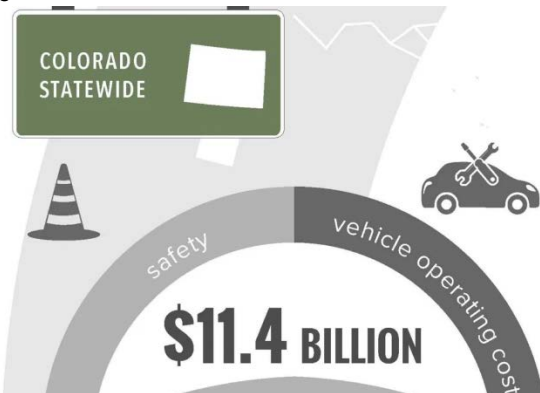
According to its website, *TRIP* was founded in 1971 as "a private, nonprofit organization that researches, evaluates, and distributes economic and technical data on surface transportation issues. By generating traditional and social media news coverage, *TRIP* informs and promotes policies that improve the movement of goods and people, make surface travel safer, and enhance economic development and productivity."

TRIP listed 11 transportation-related agencies as sources of information for the study.



Sturdivant added that she disagrees with the study's claim that 81 people were killed in Colorado Springs traffic crashes each year from 2018 to 2022.

"I think we actually had half that many," she said. "Half is still too many. But we're trying to improve safety and reduce congestion. "(Wednesday) for example, we activated four new safety zones around schools. We're looking to improve signal technology that will perceive vehicular movement and vulnerable road use. This is something that the city of Colorado Springs is leading the country on, right now."



Matt Inzeo, CDOT's communications director, responded to The Road Warrior's request for comment on the matter.

"We can't comment because the data (*TRIP* is) using mixes data on state and local roads and bridges. We can't speak to local infrastructure, as we do not build and maintain that infrastructure. We raised the issue with *TRIP* staff when we reviewed a draft copy of their report."