

Traffic

REPORT: Capital Region drivers lose nearly \$2K on NY roads

by: [Kristina Handy](#) | January 15, 2025

ALBANY, N.Y. (NEWS10) — The daily commute is draining more than just the gas tanks of Capital Region drivers — it is also draining their wallets. In total, the average driver in the Albany-Troy- Schenectady area is losing \$1,863 annually due to deteriorated, congested and unsafe roads and bridges in the area, according to an annual report by TRIP, a national transportation research nonprofit.

“The lack of infrastructure investment that keeps pace with inflation has real consequences for the traveling public and for our region’s economy,” said Mark Eagan, president and CEO of the Capital Region Chamber, and the Center for Economic Growth. “New Yorkers deserve 21st century infrastructure.”

To start, over one-third of the Capital Region’s major state and locally-owned roads and highways were in subpar condition, the report found. With 16% classified as poor and 23% as mediocre, at least 39% of roadways include potholes, rutting or rough surfaces. Additionally, of the 840 bridges in the Capital Region, 9% are rated poor or structurally deficient.

The average Capital Region motorist reportedly racks up an additional \$532 each year in extra vehicle operating costs due to these inadequate road conditions. These costs cover accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs and increased fuel consumption and tire wear, the study said.

Traffic congestion also cost motorists a hefty sum in 2024, the report found. In the Capital Region, congestion caused about 47 annual hours of delay and 23 gallons of wasted fuel per motorist, the second highest rates in the state. This reportedly totaled \$927 annually for the average area driver.

The Capital Region is also no stranger to car crashes, likely due in part to a lack of adequate roadway safety features, the report found. The state as a whole saw a 19% increase in traffic fatalities from 2019 through 2023. Between 2018 and 2022, the Capital Region had an average of 43 fatalities per year.

Location	VOC	Safety	Congestion	TOTAL
Albany-Schenectady-Troy	\$532	\$404	\$927	\$1,863
Binghamton	\$553	\$483	\$549	\$1,585
Buffalo-Niagara Falls	\$465	\$371	\$1,146	\$1,982
New York-Newark-Jersey City	\$694	\$263	\$2,535	\$3,492
Poughkeepsie-Newburgh-Middletown	\$566	\$537	\$722	\$1,825
Rochester	\$432	\$444	\$952	\$1,828
Syracuse	\$473	\$461	\$460	\$1,394
Utica	\$452	\$512	\$488	\$1,452
New York Statewide	\$8.9 Billion	\$11.2 Billion	\$17.9 Billion	\$38 Billion

This table shows the financial impacts of vehicle operating costs, safety and congestion for the average driver in various New York regions, compiled by TRIP.

Despite these conditions, the study reported that there had been a lack of movement by the state to improve New York’s roads, highways and bridges. According to the report, capital investment by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in state and locally owned road and highway pavements dropped 29% from 2022 to 2023. Investment in state and locally owned bridges also dropped by 20%.

However, federal funding made some headway, currently supporting 40% of the revenue used by the NYSDOT to fund highway and bridge improvements. Signed into law in November 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will provide \$13.5 billion in federal funds to New York for highway and bridge investments over five years. This represents a 52% increase in annual federal funding for roads and bridges in the state over the previous federal surface transportation program.

Still, the TRIP report stressed the need for greater investment in New York’s transportation infrastructure to reduce costs and improve safety for New York drivers. It would also boost the state’s overall economy.

“The TRIP report highlights the urgent need for sustained and predictable funding to address New York’s transportation challenges,” said Joseph Alston, director of government affairs for The Business Council of New York State, Inc. “The deteriorating condition of our roads and bridges poses a significant threat to business operations, increasing costs and reducing economic competitiveness.”