New research shows poor quality of Oklahoma roads and impacts on drivers

FOX23.com News Staff, Devyn Lyon | **April 22, 2025**

TULSA, Okla. — New independent research is showing the poor quality of Oklahoma roads and the impacts it has on drivers.

TRIP, a national transportation research nonprofit based in Washington, D.C., presented data from a newly released report on the quality and impact of Oklahoma roads during a press conference on Tuesday.

The data presented is reflective from April of 2024 to April of 2025.

Here's some highlights from the data for the Tulsa area:

- Road conditions cost individual drivers nearly $2,500 in annual vehicle repairs. Statewide, those repairs total to $6.4 billion.
- In Tulsa, 24 percent of major roads were graded "mediocre" and 37 percent were graded "poor"
- TRIP's data says traffic congestion is back to pre-pandemic levels. The average Tulsan spends an extra 42 hours in traffic every year, leading to over 50 gallons of gas, per vehicle, wasted.

The virtual news conference was in collaboration with TRIP, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, the State Chamber of Oklahoma and the Association of Oklahoma Contractors.

"It's a reminder to how vital our transportation system is, not only to the quality of life for Oklahomans but for the State's economy," Rocky Moretti with TRIP said.

All parties involved consider the cause of road conditions to be inflation of road repair materials and labor, along with the large amount of semi-truck traffic in Oklahoma.

The data from TRIP showed traffic is expected to double in the next five years.

Moretti said this reflects the growth of Oklahoma's economy, but also the need for more state funds to be invested in road conditions.

"A lack of adequate investment in transportation and increasing inflation in construction costs could hamper Oklahoma's ability to make needed improvements to its transportation network, according to a new report released today by TRIP," TRIP said in the announcement.

Bobby Stem, Executive Director, Association of Oklahoma General Contractors, noted the data reflected a majority of "good" or "fair" quality for major bridges after large investments from the state over the past 15 years.

He said in a similar fashion, the same needs to be done for roads. However, they're concerned with the growing push for tax cuts from the state government.

"I hate to be so blunt about it, but it takes money, money is what builds roads and bridges," Stem said in the news conference. "Unlike education, public safety and health, this problem gets solved with money. Money, so what buys asphalt, rebar and pays people on the ground. So, I think it's just highly reckless for us to be discussing tax cuts at this time."

Stem questioned the Governor's recent plan to cut income taxes, titled "Half and a Path."

"Instead of 'Half and a Path,' I think we're gonna get half of a path," Stem said. "We're gonna begin slipping behind if we cut our income tax. I think we need tax reform but not tax cuts at this point in time."

For the full report, "Oklahoma Transportation By The Numbers: Providing a Modern, Efficient Transportation Network in the Sooner State," the news conference recording and infographics, click here.

You can reach the City of Tulsa's pothole reporting number at 311 or 918-596-2100.