

KRQE Albuquerque

Report finds New Mexico road conditions cost drivers a combined \$3.3 billion annually

Fallon Fischer | January 15, 2026



ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (KRQE) – New Mexico roads and bridges that are deteriorated, congested, or lack some desirable safety features cost the state’s motorists a total of \$3.3 billion annually, according to a new report released by [TRIP](#), a Washington, DC based national transportation research nonprofit.

The report, “[New Mexico Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the state’s need for safe, smooth and efficient mobility](#),” includes regional pavement and bridge conditions, highway safety data, and cost breakdowns for the Albuquerque, Las Cruces and Santa Fe urban areas and statewide.

| Location | VOC | Safety | Congestion | TOTAL |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Albuquerque | \$1,083 | \$697 | \$1,281 | \$3,061 |
| Las Cruces | \$1,043 | \$460 | \$482 | \$1,985 |
| Santa Fe | \$859 | \$581 | \$693 | \$2,133 |
| NEW MEXICO STATEWIDE | \$1.6 Billion | \$839 Million | \$900 Million | \$3.3 Billion |

Chart shows a breakdown of the costs per driver in New Mexico’s largest urban areas, along with a statewide total. (Credit: TRIP)

Focusing on Albuquerque, the transportation conditions cost \$3,061 per driver in urban parts of the city due to higher vehicle operating costs due to driving on rough roads, congestion-related delays and the financial costs of traffic crashes, according to the report.

The TRIP report found that 40% of major locally and state-maintained roads in the Albuquerque urban area are in poor condition and another 18% are in mediocre condition, costing the average driver an additional \$1,083 each year in extra vehicle operating costs (VOC), which includes accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. Across the state, 34% of New Mexico’s major roads are in poor condition and 22% are in mediocre condition.

According to the report, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) has identified more than \$7.5 billion in needed but unfunded transportation projects throughout the state.

“The list of needed projects that are not able to move forward will continue to grow longer and conditions will deteriorate further if the state isn’t able to address the significant transportation funding challenges,” Dave Kearby, TRIP’s executive director, stated in a news release. “Without additional investment, New Mexico’s transportation system will become increasingly deteriorated and congested, hampering economic growth, safety and quality of life.”

New Mexico State Rep. Gail Armstrong, minority floor leader and member of the New Mexico House Transportation, Public Works and Capital Improvements Committee, acknowledged that in order for New Mexico to grow, it needs to maintain and

improve its transportation system.

“In order to maintain quality of life and fuel continued economic growth, it is critical that the state provide a safe and modern

transportation system that can accommodate future growth in population, tourism, business, recreation and vehicle travel. It is our responsibility and duty as a Legislature to make this happen,” Armstrong stated in the news release.

To see the full report, [click here](#).