

In Rochester area, poor roads cost average driver \$2K+ per year, report says

by Daniel Finkelstein | Thursday, February 5, 2026



Mechanics at Vesa's Automotive on University Ave. are seen working on a vehicle, Thursday, February 5, 2026 (Photo by Daniel Finkelstein/WHAM)

Rochester, N.Y. — [A new report from TRIP, A National Transportation Research Non-Profit](#) said deteriorating roads are costing New York drivers more than \$40B per year.

From extra gas, to repairs, and wear and tear, Jonah McNair said driving his car here in Rochester can hurt his wallet.

"I spent \$500 on tires last year, just repairing the ones that had bubbles and damage from all the hidden potholes," McNair told 13WHAM while getting gas in Rochester. "There's nothing you can do, especially when you're stuck in traffic every morning. There's a pothole in the middle of the road, and you can't avoid it. You just have to eat it."

In Henrietta, Pamela Walker said she tries her best to avoid hitting them. Walker drives a car with 20" wheels, and said replacing them isn't cheap - she pays about \$400 per tire.

"When it's dark out, you're missing the opportunity to not hit the potholes," Walker said. "...as well as watch out for the people around you. It's bad out there."

The costs that drivers bear due in part to the conditions of the roads add up. According to TRIP's report, New York roads cost drivers in the Rochester area more than \$2,000 in extra vehicle operating costs each year, on average.

"It's very painful," Nick Pietropaolo, a mechanic at Vesa's Automotive on University Avenue remarked.

Pietropaolo said the shop expects to see a boost in business with fluctuating temperatures in March, and with the holiday season in the rearview mirror for customers. He said road quality-related repairs are common.

"We're getting a lot of people specifically, in and around the city, the highways, seeing a lot of them happening from the off-ramps, and on ramps, which have a lot of potholes," Pietropaolo said. "It's every year, it's always the same type of scenario."

The report from TRIP said about 31% of roads in the Rochester area are in poor or mediocre condition, and warned that inflating costs threaten the state's ability to keep up with demand.

"Drive slower, keep a lookout, especially if it's a route that you haven't taken before," Pietropaolo said. "Pretty much any road that you go on in Rochester has the chance of having a decent pothole and can do some damage."

"New York State is investing more in the modernization of its transportation infrastructure than at any other point in the state's history," a spokesperson for the New York State Department of Transportation said in a statement. "Under Governor Hochul's leadership, the state's historic five-year capital plan, which started out at \$32.8 billion at the beginning of the five-year period has grown to a total of \$34.4 billion. The TRIP report highlights the need for continued federal partnership and continued commitment to a long-term national strategy to address infrastructure needs – particularly as we are in the last year of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Support for roads and bridges is critical to the economic competitiveness of New York and the northeast, as this region faces unique challenges that other states do not face, including the age of the existing infrastructure, extreme weather and high traffic volumes."