

## **Drivers lose nearly \$4,000 annually on New York City, Long Island and New Jersey roads due to congested and deteriorated roads, according to a transportation nonprofit's report released yesterday.**

John Asbury reports in *NEWSDAY* that the national transportation research nonprofit group known as TRIP said drivers in the metro area, which includes Long Island and parts of New Jersey, spent about \$3,755 per vehicle due to higher costs, traffic crashes and congestion delays. Statewide, those expenses total \$40.3 billion, according to the group's report.

"A lack of adequate investment in transportation and increasing inflation in construction costs could hamper New York's ability to make needed improvements to its transportation network," the report stated.

Those figures are up from about \$3,500 per vehicle in last year's report.

Nearly half of major highways and local roads statewide, the report noted, are listed "in poor or mediocre condition," which costs drivers an additional \$718 in gas and maintenance expenses. In the NYC metro area, about 35% of roads are considered in good condition while 31% of roads are in poor condition, according to the report.

The report also found that 435 bridges, or 7% of the region's bridges, were in poor condition and in need of immediate repair. Another 68%, or 4,562 bridges, were in fair condition.

Officials said the cost of highway repairs had increased, while state transportation spending had dropped. Highway construction costs nationally have increased by more than 70% since 2020, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

New York City and Long Island drivers also are losing time and money commuting, according to the report. The nonprofit estimates the average driver loses 99 hours each year in delays. Commuting costs average drivers about \$2,662 in lost time and fuel.

The average driver wastes about 31 gallons of fuel due to congestion, costing drivers \$20 billion annually. Analysts said New York City area traffic had returned to pre-pandemic levels and the state DOT estimates traffic will increase 23% by 2040, the report notes.