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DEFICIENT, CONGESTED ROADWAYS COST AVERAGE BIRMINGHAM AREA DRIVER NEARLY \$1,700 ANNUALLY, A TOTAL OF \$4.2 BILLION STATEWIDE. COSTS WILL RISE AND TRANSPORTATION WOES WILL WORSEN WITHOUT INCREASED FUNDING

Eds.: The report includes regional pavement conditions, congestion levels, highway safety data, and cost breakdowns for the Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile and Montgomery urban areas. Info-graphics for each area can be downloaded [here](#).

Birmingham, AL – Roads and bridges that are deficient, congested or lack desirable safety features cost Alabama motorists a total of \$4.2 billion statewide annually - \$1,663 per driver in the Birmingham urban area - due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes and congestion-related delays. Increased investment in transportation improvements at the local, state and federal levels could relieve traffic congestion, improve road, bridge and transit conditions, boost safety, and support long-term economic growth in Alabama, according to a new report released today by [TRIP](#), a Washington, DC based national transportation organization.

The TRIP report, [“Alabama Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State’s Need for Safe, Smooth and Efficient Mobility,”](#) finds that throughout Alabama, 19 percent of major urban roads are in poor condition and eight percent of Alabama’s bridges are structurally deficient. The state’s major urban roads are becoming increasingly congested, with drivers wasting significant amounts of time and fuel each year. And, nearly 4,300 people were killed in crashes on Alabama’s roads from 2011 to 2015.

Driving on deficient roads costs the average Birmingham area driver \$1,663 per year in the form of extra vehicle operating costs (VOC) as a result of driving on roads in need of repair, lost time and fuel due to congestion-related delays, and the costs of traffic crashes in which roadway features likely were a contributing factor. The TRIP report calculates the cost to motorists of insufficient roads in the Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile and Montgomery urban areas. A breakdown of the costs per motorist in each area along with a statewide total is below.

	VOC	Safety	Congestion	Total
Birmingham	\$487	\$285	\$891	\$1,663
Huntsville	\$619	\$196	\$510	\$1,325
Mobile	\$379	\$388	\$670	\$1,437
Montgomery	\$391	\$352	\$553	\$1,296
STATEWIDE TOTAL	\$1.5 Billion	\$1.5 Billion	\$1.2 Billion	\$4.2 Billion

The TRIP report finds that 48 percent of major roads in the Birmingham urban area are in poor or mediocre condition, costing the average motorist an additional \$487 each year in extra vehicle operating

costs, including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear.

“Safe and efficient roads are a top priority for the City of Birmingham because it lessens the burden on our citizens,” said Birmingham Mayor William Bell. “Our economic growth as a city and region depends on the mobility of our workforce, and if our roads are congested and deficient that hurts our chances when recruiting and retaining companies. We are dedicated to working with our legislators, both locally and nationally, to help them understand that investing in our infrastructure is a major part of the ‘big picture’ here in Birmingham.”

Traffic congestion in the Birmingham area is worsening, causing 34 annual hours of delay for the average motorist and costing each driver \$891 annually in lost time and wasted fuel.

“The issue of investing in our state’s infrastructure is about economic development, safety and quality of life for all citizens across the great state of Alabama,” said Jim Page, chairman of the Alliance for Alabama’s Infrastructure. “This is why the Alliance for Alabama’s Infrastructure has and will continue to advocate for a fair and sustainable infrastructure proposal that provides adequate long-term funding dedicated solely for our roads and bridges.”

Eight percent of Alabama’s bridges are structurally deficient, with significant deterioration to the bridge deck, supports or other major components. In the Birmingham urban area, four percent of bridges are structurally deficient.

“The condition of Alabama’s road and bridge infrastructure is a jobs and economic development issue,” said Brian Hilson, president and CEO of the Birmingham Business Alliance. “Just as we must invest in education and training to ensure we have a competitive workforce, we must also invest in our infrastructure so we can compete and prepare for new and expanding employers. Alabama’s insufficient infrastructure is having a negative impact on jobs. Rather than allowing roads to remain unsafe and costly to use, we should invest wisely to ensure they are safe, efficient and an advantage for job growth.”

Traffic crashes in Alabama claimed the lives of 4,280 people between 2011 and 2015. Alabama’s overall traffic fatality rate of 1.26 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel is higher than the national average of 1.13. The fatality rate on Alabama’s rural non-Interstate roads was 1.96 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel, more than double the 0.92 fatality rate on all other roads and highways in the state. In the Birmingham urban area, on average, 83 people were killed in traffic crashes in each of the last three years.

The efficiency and condition of Alabama’s transportation system, particularly its highways, is critical to the health of the state’s economy. Annually, \$436 billion in goods are shipped to and from sites in Alabama, mostly by truck. Eighty-one percent of the goods shipped annually to and from sites in Alabama are carried by trucks and another 12 percent are carried by courier services or multiple mode deliveries, which include trucking.

“These conditions are only going to get worse, increasing the additional costs to motorists, if greater investment is not made available at the state and local levels of government,” said Will Wilkins, TRIP’s executive director. “Without adequate funding, Alabama’s transportation system will become increasingly deteriorated and congested, hampering economic growth and quality of life of the state’s residents.”