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ALABAMA DRIVERS LOSE \$5.3 BILLION ANNUALLY – AS MUCH AS \$1,846 PER DRIVER - ON ROADS THAT ARE ROUGH, CONGESTED & LACK SOME SAFETY FEATURES. LACK OF FUNDING WILL LEAD TO FURTHER ROAD AND BRIDGE DETERIORATION, INCREASED CONGESTION & HIGHER COSTS TO MOTORISTS

Eds.: The [statewide report](#) includes regional pavement conditions, bridge conditions, congestion levels, highway safety data, and cost breakdowns for the state’s largest urban areas. TRIP has also prepared customized regional reports for the [Anniston-Oxford-Gadsden](#), [Birmingham](#), [Florence](#), [Decatur-Huntsville](#), [Mobile](#), [Montgomery](#) and [Tuscaloosa](#) urban areas. Info-graphics for each area and statewide can be downloaded [here](#).

Birmingham, Alabama– Roads and bridges that are deteriorated, congested or lack some desirable safety features cost Alabama motorists a total of \$5.3 billion per year – as much as \$1,846 per driver in some areas - due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes and congestion-related delays. Adequate investment in transportation improvements at the local, state and federal levels is needed to 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 nonprofit transportation research organization.

The TRIP report, “[Alabama Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State’s Need for Safe, Smooth and Efficient Mobility](#)” finds that nearly one-third of Alabama’s major locally and state-maintained roads are in poor or mediocre condition and seven percent of locally and state-maintained bridges (20 feet or longer) are structurally deficient. The report also finds that the state’s major urban roads are becoming increasingly congested, causing significant delays and choking commuting and commerce. In addition to the [statewide report](#), TRIP has also prepared regional reports for the [Anniston-Oxford-Gadsden](#), [Birmingham](#), [Florence](#), [Decatur-Huntsville](#), [Mobile](#), [Montgomery](#) and [Tuscaloosa](#) urban areas.

Driving on deficient roads costs Alabama drivers \$5.3 billion annually in 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 chart below details the statewide costs as well as the cost to the average driver in each of the state’s largest urban areas.

Location	VOC	Safety	Congestion	TOTAL
Anniston-Oxford-Gadsden	\$488	\$485	\$328	\$1,301
Birmingham	\$549	\$307	\$990	\$1,846
Florence	\$716	\$389	\$362	\$1,467
Huntsville-Decatur	\$486	\$309	\$512	\$1,307
Mobile	\$425	\$407	\$744	\$1,576
Montgomery	\$404	\$321	\$614	\$1,339
Tuscaloosa	\$773	\$492	\$448	\$1,713
Alabama Statewide	\$2 Billion	\$1.8 Billion	\$1.5 Billion	\$5.3 Billion

The TRIP report finds that 14 percent of major locally and state-maintained roads in Alabama are in poor condition and another 16 percent are rated in mediocre condition, costing the state's drivers an additional \$2 billion each year in extra vehicle operating costs. These costs include accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear.

Traffic congestion in the state's largest urban areas is worsening, causing up to 37 annual hours of delay and as much as \$990 each year in lost time and wasted fuel for residents in the state's largest urban area. Alabama drivers lose a total of \$1.5 billion annually in the form of lost time and wasted fuel due to congestion.

"Infrastructure impacts both the local economy and quality of life for those who live in Montgomery," said Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange. "From tech to healthcare to public safety and tourism – everyone benefits from a sound infrastructure, and we will continue to support these improvements in our area."

Seven percent (1,200 of 16,129) of Alabama's bridges are rated structurally deficient, with significant deterioration to the bridge deck, supports or other major components. This includes all bridges that are 20 feet or more in length. Nearly half – 49 percent – of Alabama's bridges are at least 50 years old.

From 2015 to 2017, 4,507 people were killed in traffic crashes in Alabama. The financial impact of traffic crashes costs Alabama motorists a total of \$1.8 billion statewide. Alabama's overall traffic fatality rate of 1.34 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel is higher than the national average of 1.16. The fatality rate on Alabama's non-interstate rural roads is more than two and a half times higher than on all other roads in the state (2.38 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel vs. 0.87).

The buying power of the state's 18 cents-per-gallon fuel tax, last raised in 1992, has been more than cut in half by inflation and increased fuel economy. The vast majority of Alabama's current transportation budget is devoted to preserving the existing system, leaving only \$150 million available annually for new projects.

The efficiency and condition of Alabama's transportation system, particularly its highways, is critical to the health of the state's economy. Annually, \$432 billion in goods are shipped to and from sites in Alabama, mostly by trucks, relying heavily on the state's network of roads and bridges. Increasingly, companies are looking at the quality of a region's transportation system when deciding where to re-locate or expand. Regions with congested or poorly maintained roads may see businesses relocate to areas with a smoother, more efficient and more modern transportation system. More than 940,000 full-time jobs in Alabama in key industries like tourism, retail sales, agriculture and manufacturing are dependent on the state's transportation network.

"Driving on deficient roads comes with \$5.3 billion price tag for Alabama motorists," said Will Wilkins, TRIP's executive director. "Adequate funding for the state's transportation system would allow for smoother roads, more efficient mobility, enhanced safety, and economic growth opportunities while saving Alabama's drivers time and money."